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The Reproach of Annesley.

BY MAXWELL GRAY.

AUTHOR OF "THE SILENCE OF DEAN MAITLAND."

"Give me the man that is not passion's slave."

CHAPTER I.

FOOTSTEPS.

SILENCE and solitude reigned all around ; a solitude invaded by the appearance of no living creature save distant flocks of sheep dotted at large over upland pastures or grouped in wattled folds ; a silence rather deepened than broken by the peculiar and by no means unmusical sound of the wind sweeping through the short pale-yellow bents which rose sparsely above the fine rich turf of the down. The narrow, white highroad ran straight along the summit of the down ; it was unfenced on one side, where the turf sloped so abruptly down to a rich cultivated level as to make this almost invisible from the road, and on the other bounded by a bank, purple with wild thyme in summer, and crested by a high quickset hedge, which effectually concealed the northern slope of the down and the wooded country beneath it spreading away to the sea. This thorn hedge, which, in default of leaves and blossoms, bore masses of thick and hoary lichen, instead of growing erect from its bank, running nearly east and west, arched

over to the north-east with a smooth exactitude of curve, due to the fierce briny sweep of the prevailing winds, and was by the same agency smoothly shorn on the leeward side. These strong salt winds blowing off the sea, and frequently rising to gales, give all the trees and hedges within their influence a marked family likeness, stunting their growth, and forcing them to bow to the north-east as if suddenly made rigid in the height of a south-west gale.

But the salt south-west was silent on this cloudy March afternoon, and in its place a bleak east wind, whirling the white dust from the flinty chalk road, and quieting gradually down as the sun drew nearer the west, was sweeping over the short turf with its low, lonely sound, which is half whistle and half moan. The rich level to the south of the down, sprinkled though it was with occasional farms, each with its cluster of ricks and elm-trees, and varied here and there by a village spire rising from a little circle of thatched roofs, looked very solitary beneath the grey sky. It terminated on the east in some picturesquely broken hills, interrupted by a long, level grey band, which was the sea, and on the south in more hills of moderate height and irregular outline, which derived an unusual grandeur this afternoon from the deep purple shadows resting upon them, and emphasizing their contour against the silvery grey sky, a sky full of latent light. On the west again there were hills of gentler outline, beyond these little glimpses of plain and woodland, and on the farthest limit a curving break filled with a polished surface of sea, reflecting the dim yellow lustre of the declining sun, which glowed faintly through the curdling clouds above.

The wind went on singing its strange low song to the bleak down-land ; the far-off farms and villages gave no sign of life ; but one solitary sea-gull sailed slowly by on its wide, unearthly-looking wings far below the level of the high-road, yet far above the plain beneath, uttering its complaining cry and receiving the pale reflected sun-rays upon its cream-white plumage, thus making a centre of light upon the purply-grey darkness of the plain and the hills. It passed gradually out of sight, and the silence seemed more death-like than before.

Yet life and music were near, and only awaiting the summons of soft airs and warm sunbeams to spring forth and make the earth glad with beauty and melody. The gnarled, storm-bent thorns were showing tiny leaf-buds on their brown branches

where the tangled grey lichens did not usurp their place ; cowslips were pushing little satiny spirals through the short turf on the hedge-banks ; down in the copses, and beneath sheltered hedge-rows, primroses were showing their sweet, pensive faces, and white violets were budding. Many a nest was already built ; many a bird already felt the welcome pressure of eggs beneath its warm breast and tasted the fulness of the spring-time ; the tall elms on the plain already wore their warm purple robe of blossom ; black buds on the grey ash-stems in the copses were swelling to bursting-point above the primroses. Yet all seemed lifeless ; the red-brown leaves on the oak boughs shivered in the blast, it was scarcely possible to prophesy of the green and golden glory that would clothe them in one brief month. Could those dry bones live ?

Presently something black rose silently and swiftly above the green turf border of the chalk road. Beneath it appeared a human face, next a pair of broad shoulders, and finally the whole figure of a man emerged as if from the heart of the earth, and stood fully outlined against the chill sky.

He was young, and strongly rather than gracefully built ; the keen wind, from which he did not flinch by so much as an eye-blink, imparted a healthy pink to his clear complexion. His fair hair was crisped by the wind, and his grey eyes looked all round the wide scene, on which his back had been turned while stepping lightly up the down, in a singular manner. Instead of gazing straightforward like other people's, they looked downwards from beneath his eyelids, as if he had difficulty in raising the latter. Having rapidly surveyed earth, sea, and sky, he turned and walked westwards along the edge of turf by the road, so that his footsteps still made no sound, drew a watch from his pocket, then replaced it beneath his warm pea-jacket, muttering to himself, "Early yet."

Soon he heard a sound as of a multitudinous scraping and panting, above which tinkled a bell ; a cloud of dust rose a foot high from the road, showing as it parted the yellow fleeces and black legs and muzzles of a flock of Southdown sheep. He stood aside motionless upon the turf, to let them pass without hindrance ; but one of the timid creatures, nevertheless, took fright at him, and darted down the slope, followed by an unreasoning crowd of imitators. It did not need a low faint cry from the shepherd, who loomed far behind above the cloud of white dust, himself spectral-looking in his long, greyish-white

smock-frock, to send the gallant sheep-dog sweeping over the turf, with his fringes floating in the wind, and his tongue hanging from his formidable jaws, while he uttered short angry barks of reproof, and drove the truants into the right path again. But again and yet again some indiscretion on the part of the timid little black-faces demanded the energies of their lively and fussy guardian, who darted from one end of the flock to the other with joyous rapidity, hustling this sheep, grumbling at that, barking here, remonstrating there, and driving the bewildered creatures hither and thither with a zeal that was occasionally in excess, and drew forth a brief monosyllable from his master, which caused the dog to fly back and walk sedately behind him with an instant obedience that was as delightful as his intelligent activity. The actual commander of this host of living things gave little sign of energy, but walked heavily behind his charges with a slow and slouching gait, partially supporting himself on his long crooked stick, and carrying under his left arm a lamb which bleated in the purposeless way characteristic of these creatures. Yet his gaze was everywhere, and he, like his zealous lieutenant, the dog, could distinguish each of these numerous and apparently featureless creatures from the other, and every now and then a slight motion of his crook, or some inarticulate sound, conveyed a whole code of instructions to the eager watchful dog, who straightway acted upon them. All this the young man motionless on the turf watched with interest, as if a flock of sheep were something uncommon or worthy of contemplation ; and when they had all gone by, and the shepherd himself passed in review, his yellow sun-bleached beard shaken by the keen wind he was facing, he transferred his attention to him.

"Blusterous," said the shepherd, making his crook approach his battered felt hat, when he came up with him.

"Very blusterous," responded the gentleman, nodding in a friendly manner and resuming his road.

This was their whole conversation, and yet the shepherd pondered upon it for miles, and recounted it to his wife as one of the day's chief incidents.

"And I zes to 'n, 'Blusterous'—I zes ; and he zes to me, 'Terble blusterous,' he zes. Ay, that's what 'ee zed, zure enough," he repeated, with infinitesimal variations, while smoking his after-supper pipe in his chimney-corner.

Thus, you see, human intercourse may be carried on in these parts of the earth with a moderate expenditure of words.

Gervase Rickman went his way pondering upon the shepherd and his flock. How foolishly helpless and helplessly foolish the bleating innocent-faced sheep looked, as they blundered aimlessly out of the road, one blindly following the next in front with such lack of purpose, that the wonder was that here and there a solitary sheep should have sufficient intellect to strike on a fresh path and mislead his fellows. And how abject they were to the superior intellect and volition of the dog ; how tumultuously they fled before him, thus involving themselves in fresh disorder ; how tamely they yielded to his behests, when so small an exercise of will on the part of each might have baffled him, in spite of his terrible fangs ; above all, how like, how very like the mass of mankind, "the common herd," as they were so aptly called, they seemed to his musing fancy !

With what a sheep-like fidelity do men follow the few who from time to time blunder upon original paths, how blindly do they pursue them to unknown goals, and how abjectly do multitudes permit themselves to be swayed by the will of one with sufficient daring, energy, and intellect to dominate them ! The mass needs a man, a strong personality, a powerful volition to lead it ; it bows to the strongest, to a Moses, a Cæsar, a Gregory, a Charlemain, a Cromwell or a Napoleon ; democracy is but the shadow of a shade—the aimless revolt of the aimless many against shackles that have been silently forged in the process of the ages—a revolt ending in the incoherence of anarchy, weltering helplessly on till one is born strong enough to lead and create anew ; then the centuries solder and cement his work, and give it a fleeting permanence, and thus a civilization is born. Or the centuries refuse their sanction, and the work slowly resolves itself again to chaos. So Gervase Rickman mused.

But he was not of the herd ; he would follow none. He felt within himself an intensity of purpose and a passion of concentration, together with a strength of intellect that must lift him above his fellows. So he thought and mused, not knowing what was within him and into what channels the current of his character would set ; for he was young.

He went on his way, still keeping to the turf, and thus still silently, for it was his habit to move with as little sound as possible, until the ground rose into so steep a mound that he was compelled to take the road. He was now approaching the end of the down road, at the extremity of which, where the thorn

hedge ended, there stood a little lonely hostelry in an empty courtyard, fenced by a low stone wall. On one side of the small inn was a tree, bending as usual to the north-east, and imparting that air of perfect loneliness which the presence of a single tree invariably gives to an isolated building. The inn proclaimed itself the "Traveller's Rest" by a sign over its low porch and closed door. There were no flowers in the little court, though it faced the south; neither tree nor vegetable grew in the barren enclosure, which was tenanted solely by a large deer-hound stretched in a watchful attitude before the porch.

Mr. Rickman did not look at the inn, though a side glance of his eyes took in the dog with a sparkle of satisfaction; while the dog on hearing his footsteps, which were also faintly audible to two women in an upper room, slightly pricked his ears and looked at him with an indifferent air, dropping his muzzle comfortably on to his fore-paws again when he had passed.

Another road crossed the level down-road at right angles just beyond the solitary inn. Opposite the inn-front on the turf was a stagnant pond, the milky water of which was crisped to ripples by the keen wind, and in the angle formed by two roads stood a wooden sign-post.

When he reached the sign-post, Gervase Rickman leant against it with his back towards the inn, which was now some distance from him, and gazed over the broad expanse of level champain to the dark hills, on the broken slopes of which the shadows were shifting. He did not appear to mind the wind, which caught him full in the side of the face, ruffled his hair, and obliged him to press his low felt hat more firmly over his brows; the sound it made among the withered stalks above the sward pleased him, and he mused and mused in the stillness, an image of peaceful contemplation, with his refined features and look of quiet concentrated power.

While he was thus musing, his quick ears caught the sound of footsteps in the distance behind him; but he did not turn his head, for the footsteps were those of a stranger and could not interest him, so he thought. They were the firm elastic steps of a man in the flower of life, they smote the hard road with an even joyous rhythm, and were accompanied by the clear cheery tones of a voice singing,

"As we lay, all the day,
In the Bay of Biscay, O!"

Both song and footsteps penetrated to a quiet upper chamber in the inn, where two women sat together, one wasted with mortal sickness and wearing the unnatural rose of fever in her face, the other radiant with youth and health. The latter paused in her reading and looked up as the strain of manly song broke upon the quiet of the sick-room, the invalid's face brightened, and she said it was a pleasant song.

"It is a good voice," said the reader, "and the voice of a gentleman."

The singer went joyously on his way, and paused in his song when he saw the motionless figure at the foot of the sign-post. Gervase Rickman still gazed dreamily away over the valley to the dark hills. A man has but to purpose a thing strongly to gain his purpose, he was thinking; fate is but the shadow of an old savage dream; a man's life is in his own hands. In fancy he saw the flock of sheep driven on and on along the dusty highway by the shepherd, whose figure suggested all sorts of images to his mind, save the august image of the Shepherd of mankind.

"To Medington four-and-a-half miles," was written on one of the arms of the sign-post above his head, and the pedestrian reading this, paused a moment and looked at the silent figure beneath, which with averted gaze appeared unconscious of his approach. He was not skilled in reading character, or he would have observed the look of strength and steadfast purpose on the quiet face before him.

"Is this the only road to Medington?" he asked.

"No; there are four," replied Rickman, facing about, but not meeting the level gaze of the stranger, as he replied to his salutation.

"Which takes me past Arden Manor?" asked the stranger, who looked as if he would enjoy a friendly chat.

"Neither."

"Surely that is Arden Manor I saw lying beneath the down by the church as I came along?"

"Yes."

"An old gentleman named Rickman lives there, I think; a queer old dry-as-dust of a fellow, who collects antiquities."

"A Mr. Rickman, F.R.S., lives there," replied Gervase, with a dry smile; "he also collects beetles. You are perhaps a brother naturalist or antiquary?"

"I know a beetle from a butterfly and that's about all," he said. "No; I was to go over the downs from Oakwell and meet

a friend by Arden Manor on the road to Medington. I have evidently gone wrong."

"No : you are quite right. If you keep straight on you will come to Arden Cross at the foot of the hill. For Arden Manor you turn to the left, but that takes you away from Medington. Turn up the lane to the right, and you go direct over the downs to Medington, or straight on by the high-road you get to Medington."

"Paul meant Arden Cross," reflected the stranger aloud. "Thank you. I remember the down path now, that is the short cut. Can you help me to a light ? This wind is too much for matches."

Gervase opened his jacket, and in the shelter thus made the stranger, stooping, for he was tall, struck a match and lighted a short pipe, thus giving the other the opportunity of a close and unobserved scrutiny of his face in the glow of the match. It was a dark, healthy, well-favoured face, on the whole the kind of face that goes to the heart of every woman, old or young.

"A good-looking fool," thought Gervase, consigning him mentally to the herd of mankind. "Edward Annesley, no doubt ; an officer, by his moustache and swagger."

He was wrong about the swagger : though the stranger walked like a soldier. Having lighted his pipe, the officer, thanking him for his courtesy, went on his way down the hill, and was lost to sight before the sound of his footsteps ceased to ring upon the hard road, Rickman looking after him with a superior sort of smile, until the sound of other steps approaching from behind stirred every fibre within him, and lit a flame in his veiled grey eyes. On came the steps, swift, light, and even, very different from the soldier's firm strides, though telling like them of youth, health, and a light heart ; yet Gervase, for all the stir of feeling they evoked within him, appeared to take no notice of them, but continued his rapt contemplation of the shadowed hill-slopes, brightened now by long moted shafts of light from the sinking sun, around which the clouds were breaking away in beautiful glory as the keen wind stilled itself more and more in shifting to a warmer quarter.

A voice soon accompanied the light footsteps, echoing in a woman's round, clear notes, the soldier's song :

"There we lay, all the day,
In the Bay of Biscay, O !"

At this point Mr. Rickman left the post against which he

had so long been leaning, and strolled quietly on without turning his head, while the singer, who made rapid progress, repeated her snatch of song, and the hound, which had been lying before the inn-door, flew before and around her in widening sweeps, all the grace and strength of its lithe slender body showing to the utmost advantage, until it included Gervase in its gyrations, whereupon he turned and waited, while a tall young woman came up with him.

"I thought you would never see me, Gervase," she said. "What deadly schemes were you meditating under the sign-post?"

"I was watching the weather," he replied; "the wind is chopping round, we shall have a change. Where have you been?"

"With Ellen Gale; I am glad for her sake the wind is changing, the east wind is so bad for her."

She came between Gervase and the setting sun, which grew more radiant each moment, and now sent forth a dazzling mesh of golden rays to tangle themselves in the short growth of curling hairs roughed by the wind from her rich plaits beneath, thus forming a saint-like halo around the face of Alice Lingard, a face distinguished by that indefinable charm, which is the very essence of beauty, and yet is often wanting in the most perfect features. It was a charm which went to the very heart of the young man walking by her side, and yet which he could not describe; he knew only that it was lacking to every other face he had ever seen; he knew also that it was not given to every one to discover that hidden grace. For each face has its own charm, the magic of which has different power over different people, and enchant many or few, according to its own intrinsic potency.

The two walked on together at Alice's brisker pace, talking with the unconstraint of familiar friends; Alice involved in the glory of the warm sun-rays, while a deeper rose bloomed in her face as the fresh air touched it, and her blood warmed with the exercise; Gervase for the most part listening, and monosyllabic.

They passed a large deserted chalk quarry, its steep cliff-sides looking ghost-like, save where a stray sunbeam shot its long gold lustre upon them, and then they came round the shoulder of the down and saw, nestling beneath it, a church with a low, square, grey tower and a gabled stone house sheltered from the south-west by a row of weather-beaten Scotch firs; lower down

along the valley ran a straggling village, all thatch and greenery. Then they left the chalk, and dipped into a deep sandy lane with steep banks and overhanging hedges, and here in sheltered nooks primroses were looking shyly forth, and violets were pushing tiny buds to the light.

"But not a violet is out yet," said Alice.

This was the moment of Gervase's triumph. He took from a deep pocket a something carefully folded in a leaf, and, uncovering it, presented to his companion, with a quiet smile, a little posy of white violets, pink-tipped, and set in a gleaming circle of leaves.

She took it with an exclamation of pleasure, and lifted it to her fresh face to inhale its delicate fragrance. "To think that you should find the first!" she said, half jealously.

He was in the seventh heaven, but said nothing. He had secretly watched the budding of those violets for a week, and walked far and quickly to gather them for her that afternoon, and now he had his reward in seeing her caress the flowers and talk of them for a good five minutes, till the sound of hoofs along the lane behind them made her look up.

CHAPTER II.

FIRE-LIGHT.

The rapid beat of hoofs and the roll of wheels drew nearer and nearer, and a dog-cart drawn by a serviceable cob flashed down the hill towards the pedestrians with many a scattered pebble and spark of fire, for the dusk was now falling.

On reaching them, the driver pulled the cob sharply up upon his haunches, gave the reins to the groom, sprang to the ground, all in a flash of time, and was shaking hands with Gervase and Alice, and walking by their side almost before they had time to recognize him. Alice gave him a frank smile of welcome, and Gervase smiled too, but he murmured something inaudibly to himself that was not flattering to the newcomer.

The latter was a young man, with a dark, strong, intelligent face, which had just missed being handsome. He walked well, dressed well, and had about him a certain air which would have challenged attention anywhere. He did not look like a parish doctor.

"And how are they all at Arden?" he asked, in a full cordial voice. "Where *did* you get those violets? It is enough to make a man mad. See here, I thought these were the first." And he drew a second little bunch of white violets from his breast-pocket and gave them to Alice, who received them with another frank smile.

"How kind of you to think of me!" she said. "Gervase found these, but he was only five minutes ahead of you."

Gervase smiled inwardly; the new-comer's face darkened and he silently returned the rude observation the former had made upon him a moment before, and then comforted himself by the reflection, "Gervase is nobody."

"So you have been visiting my patients again, Miss Lingard," he said aloud; "you must not go about making people well in this reckless way. How are we poor doctors to live?"

"Did you find Ellen any better?" she asked.

"She was wonderfully perked up, as the cottagers say; I knew you had been there, without any telling. We must try to get her through the spring winds. I say, Rickman, you haven't seen such a thing as a stray cousin anywhere about, have you?"

"I did catch sight of such an article half-an-hour since," he replied. "He asked me the way to Medington by Arden Manor, where one Paul, it appeared, had agreed to meet him."

"A tall, good-looking fellow with a pleasant face——"

"And a beautiful voice," interrupted Alice. "It must be the gentleman I heard singing past the 'Traveller's Rest,' Gervase. I was just going to ask if you had seen him."

"He sings like a nightingale. Yes; that was no doubt Ted. Oh! you will all like him. I shall bring him over to the Manor, if I can. I don't say if I may," he added with a smile.

"Because you know we are always pleased to see your friends," returned Gervase. "But your cousin is an old friend of ours, Annesley, and evidently remembered us. He asked if a queer old fellow named Rickman lived in Arden Manor down there."

"The rascal! Did you tell him he was speaking to the queer old fellow's son?"

"Not I. I wanted to hear what he would say about us."

"What a shame!" said Alice; "those are the bad underhand ways Sibyl and I are always trying to overcome in you. Well, Dr. Annesley, here is Arden Cross, but no cousin apparently."

"He would be well over St. Michael's Down by this time," added Gervase. "But who is this, coming down the lane?"

Two figures emerged from the deeply-shadowed lane which led from the down to the paler dusk of the cross-roads, and discovered themselves to be an elderly labouring man and a youth, both clad in fustian, who touched their hats and then stopped.

"Evening, miss ; evening, sir. Ben up hoam, Dacter ? Poor Eln was terble bad 's marning," said the elder, who was no other than the host of the "Traveller's Rest," Jacob Gale.

"Ellen was better," replied the doctor cheerfully.

"Oh ! yes ; she was really quite bright when I saw her, Gale," added Alice, in a still more encouraging voice.

The man shook his head. "She won't never be better," he growled, "though she med perk up a bit along of seeing you, miss. I've a zin too many goo that way to be took in, bless your heart. How long do ye give her, Dacter ? I baint in no hurry vur she to goo, as I knows on," he added, with a view to contradict erroneous impressions.

The doctor replied that it was impossible to say ; she might linger for months, or she might go that night.

"They all goos the same way," continued the man, "one after t'other, nothun caint stop 'em. There was no pearter mayde about than our Eln a year ago come Middlemass, a vine-growed mayde she was as ever I zeen," he repeated in a rough voice, through which the very breath of tragedy sighed ; "zing she 'ood like a thrush, and her chakes like a hrose. A peart mayde was our Eln, I warnt she was."

"She is very happy ; she is willing to go," said Alice, trying to comfort him.

"Ah ! they all goos off asy. My missus she went fust ; a vine vigure of a ooman, too. Vive on 'em lies down Church-lytten there, Miss Lingard, and all in brick graves, buried comfortable. They've a got to goo and they goos. Hreuben here, he'll hae to go next. There's the hred in 's chakes, and he coughs terble already."

Reuben smiled pensively ; he was a handsome lad, with dark eyes and a delicate yet brilliant pink-and-white complexion.

"Nonsense," interposed Paul, "Reuben's well enough. You shouldn't frighten the boy, Gale. Give him good food, and his cough will soon go. Don't you believe him, Reuben. You are only growing fast."

"He'll hae to goo long with t'others," continued the father, "dacters ain't no good agen a decline. A power of dacter's stuff

ben inside of they that's gone. They've all got to goo, all got to goo."

"Reckon I'll hae to goo," added Reuben, in a more cheerful refrain to his father's melancholy chant.

Alice tried in vain to reason the pair into a more hopeful frame of mind, and then scolded them, and finally bid them good-night, and they parted, the heavy boots of the two Gales striking the road in slow funeral beats as they trudged wearily up-hill, the lighter steps of the gentlefolk making swift and merry music downwards.

"Oh, Paul!" said Alice, turning to him after a backward glance at the father and son, "we must save Reuben; we cannot let him die!"

"My dear Alice, you must not take all the illnesses in the parish to heart," interposed Gervase; "the boy will be all right, as Annesley told him. Why try to deprive Gale of his chief earthly solace? The old fellow revels in his own miseries. It is a kind of distinction to that class of people to have a fatal disease in their family."

"Hereditary too," added Paul; "as respectable as a family ghost in higher circles."

"Or the curse of Gledesworth. I am glad the curse does not blight the tenants as well as the landlord," continued Gervase. For Arden Manor belonged to the Gledesworth estate.

"Or the Mowbray temper," laughed Paul. "Nay, dear Miss Lingard, do not look so reproachful. I am doing my best for Reuben. But he is consumptive, and I doubt if he will stand another winter, though his lungs are still whole. We must try to accept facts. Why, we poor doctors would be fretted to fiddle-strings in a month if we did not harden our hearts to the inevitable."

"But is this inevitable?" asked Alice, with an earnest gaze into his dark-blue eyes that set his heart throbbing. "Need this bright young life be thrown away? I know how good your heart is, and how you often feel most when you speak most roughly. But if Reuben were Gervase, you know that he would not have to die."

"You mean that I should order Gervase to the South. Doubtless."

"Very well. And if we set our wits to work we may expatriate Reuben. We must. Gervase, you are great at schemes. Scheme Reuben into a warm climate before next winter."

"We have received our orders, Annesley," replied Gervase, laughing, as they turned up a broad lane, at the end of which the grey manor house, with its gables and mullioned windows, loomed massive in the dusk—a dusk deepened on one side by the row of wind-bowed firs.

Paul accompanied them, as a matter of course, though he had turned quite out of his homeward way; while his servant, without asking or receiving orders, drove the dog-cart round to the stable-yard, whither the cob would have found his way alone, so accustomed was he to its welcome hospitality.

Through the gateway, with its stone piers topped by stone globes, and up the drive bounded by the velvet turf of a century's growth, the three walked in the deepening dusk, and saw a ruddy glow in the uncurtained windows of the hall, round the porch of which myrtle grew mingled with ivy and roses. Gervase opened the door, and they entered a spacious hall wainscoted in oak, carved about the doorways and the broad chimney-piece, beneath which, on the open hearth, burnt a fire of wood. The leaping flames danced merrily on the polished walls; on a broad staircase shining and slippery with beeswax and the labour of generations; on a few old pictures, some trophies of armour and some oaken settles and chairs of an old quaint fashion; and upon a table near the hearth, on which a tea-service was set out.

An elderly lady sat by the fire, knitting and occasionally talking, for want of a better listener, to a cat sitting bolt upright in front of the fire, into which it stared, as if inquiring of some potent oracle, and sometimes turning its head with a blissful wink in response to its mistress's voice. This lady was small and slight, with a rosy, unwrinkled face and grey hair, and an expression so innocent and sweet as to be almost childlike, yet she resembled Gervase sufficiently to prove herself his mother. Mrs. Rickman's grammar was hazy and her spelling uncertain; she was not sure if metaphysics were a science or an instrument; she habitually curtsied to the new moon, and did nothing important on a Friday (which sometimes caused serious domestic inconvenience); but her manners were such as immediately put all who addressed her at their ease, and her pleasant uncritical smile encouraged, even invited, people to tell her their troubles and confess their misdoings.

"Come, children," she said cheerily, rising when the door opened to busy herself at the table, "here is tea just made. What, Paul?

I did not see you in the dusk. We have not seen you for an age, three days at least. Gervase, throw me on a fresh log, my dear."

"We certainly deserve no tea at this time of night," said Alice, who was busy laying aside her hat and furs. "Come, Hubert, leave the doctor alone and lie down by Puss."

The deer-hound, who had been fawning on Paul, stretched himself on the rug on one side of the fire, not daring to take the middle, since Puss disdained to move so much as a paw to make way for the new-comer.

Alice took the chair Gervase placed for her, and began showing Mrs. Rickman her two bunches of violets, one of which she put in water, and the other (Paul observed with a thrill that it was his) in her dress, where the soft rise and fall of her breath rocked it in an unconscious Elysium.

"And where are Mr. Rickman and Sibyl?" he asked, flushing with a secret joy, while Gervase was deeply pondering the disposition of the violets, and persuading himself that his bunch was the more cherished, since it was secured from fading, and yet not quite sure on the point.

"Sibyl is at the parsonage practising with the choir," said Mrs. Rickman. "Mr. Rickman is on the downs examining some barrows which have just been opened, and no one knows when he will be back. Alice, my dear child, what a fearful state your hair is in!"

Alice put up her hands with a futile attempt to smooth the rich braids, which were roughened into little rings on the surface by the wind.

"Never mind, Auntie," she replied. "Dr. Annesley will forgive me this once, and you and Gervase are used to it. And it doesn't matter in the firelight."

"That is how Alice abuses our long-suffering," growled Gervase, thinking how pretty the tumbled hair was, in which Paul agreed silently with him.

"Miss Lingard is quite right about the firelight," said Paul, in his stately manner. "An elegant negligence suits best with this informal meal in the dusk. Yes, if you forgive my saying so, Alice, you make a delightful picture on that quaint settle, with the hound at your knee, and the armour above your head, and the hearth blazing beneath that splendid old chimney near."

He did not add what he thought, that the grace with which she sat half-reclined in the cross-legged oaken seat, and the sweet

expression of her face lighted by the varying flames, made the chief charm of the picture.

"Dr. Annesley," replied Alice, meeting his gaze of earnest and respectful admiration, "you are becoming a courtier. I do not recognize my honest old friend, Paul, with his blunt but wholesome rebuffs."

"It is I who am rebuffed now," he replied, singularly discomposed by the gravity of her manner.

"Nonsense, Paul," interrupted Mrs. Rickman, "Alice can only be honoured by such a pretty compliment. You ought to be of Gervase's profession."

"Yes; I always maintained that Annesley would make a first-rate lawyer," added Gervase.

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Annesley, with a fervour that was almost religious.

Gervase laughed, and rose to settle a half-burnt log which threatened to fall when burnt asunder, thus ruining a fire-landscape that Alice had been dreamily gazing upon.

"How cruel you are—you have shattered the most romantic vision of crags and castles!" she said. "And you have destroyed the poetry of the hour, for I must light these candles."

"Were you seeing your future in the fire?" Paul asked, as he lighted the candles she brought forward, thrilling with delicate emotion when he touched her hand accidentally, and caught the play of the newly-kindled flame on her features.

Gervase watched them narrowly, though furtively, with a secret pity for Paul, for a vision less keen than his might detect a total absence of response on her part to the young doctor's unspoken feeling; and then he thought of his own future, which he read in the dull red glow of the fire, while the others kept up a desultory conversation in which their thoughts did not enter.

He had drifted, he scarcely knew how, into the office of Whewell and Sons, solicitors. His mind in those early days had taken no bent sufficiently strong to make him resist his father's desire that he should follow law, since he declined the paternal profession of physic, a profession which Mr. Rickman, a London physician with a fair practice, had early left because he said he could not endure the whims of sick people, but really because, having a competency, he wished to pursue his favourite studies in the quiet of Arden, where Sibyl was born when Gervase was about nine years old.

But once in the office, he found much to interest him, and

after making progress from a desire to do his duty and please his parents, whose hopes all rested on their only son, ambition awoke in him, and he decided to make himself the head of the firm, and the firm the head of the profession in the county. This, at eight-and-twenty, he had accomplished. Whewell and Son was now Whewell and Rickman. The younger Whewell had renounced a profession that wearied him, and the elder was at an age when love of ease is stronger than love of power, and it was well known that the junior partner was the soul of the business, which daily increased.

As far as a country solicitor could rise, Gervase Rickman intended to rise, and then he intended to enter Parliament, where he felt his powers would have an opportunity of developing. This purpose he had as yet confided to no one, though he was daily feeling his way and laying the foundations of local popularity. A man who makes himself once heard in the House of Commons has, he knew, providing he possesses the genius of a ruler of men, a destiny more brilliant than that of any sovereign in the civilized world, and Gervase, looking at the consuming brands and listening to the harmonious blending of Paul's deep voice with Alice's pure treble, saw such magnificent prospects as the others did not dream him capable of entertaining. And through all those princely visions Alice moved, with an imperial grace.

"But what has become of your cousin all this time?" Alice was asking of the doctor.

"Over the downs and in Medington by this time. We don't dine till half-past seven, so my mother will have a good hour to purr over the fellow and make much of him. Ned always was a lucky fellow, if you remember, Mrs. Rickman. He had the knack of making friends."

"He was a winning and well-behaved boy, I remember," she replied. "How fond Sibyl was of him!"

"It is just the same now, or rather it was at school. Whatever Ned did, people liked him. If he neglected his lessons, he always got off in class by means of lucky shots. Other fellows' shots failed. Born under a happy star."

"Yet he must inherit the curse of Gledesworth," Alice said.

"Oh! that is at an end. Reginald Annesley being in a lunatic asylum fulfils the conditions of the distich,

"Whanne ye lorde ys mewed in stonen celle,
Gledesworth thanne shalle brake hys spelle."

"Facts seem against the theory," Gervase said, "since the estate cannot now pass from Reginald Annesley to his son. By the way, have you not heard, Paul? Young Reginald is dead, killed while elephant-hunting in South Africa."

"Captain Annesley? Reginald? Dead?" cried Paul, with excitement. "We heard he was in Africa, and his wife and baby came home. Are you sure? Is it not some repetition of poor Julian's story?"

"It is perfectly true," replied Gervase, who was agent to the Gledesworth estate; "the news arrived yesterday."

Paul Annesley's father was first cousin to the Annesley who owned the estate, and who was only slightly acquainted with him. Paul did not even know any of those Annesleys, and the mad Annesley having had three sons, one of whom was married, and all of whom had grown to manhood, the prospect of inheriting the family estates had never entered his wildest dreams. But now only two lives stood between him and that rich inheritance; the life of an elderly maniac and that of an infant. No one knew better than he how large a percentage of male infants die.

"It is awfully sad," he said. "Oh! it does seem as if the curse was a reality, and worked still."

"I never believed in the curse," said Mrs. Rickman; "and I disbelieve it still. People die when the Almighty sees fit, it is not for us to ask why."

But Alice was a firm believer in the curse of Gledesworth, and defended its morality stoutly. Why, if blessings attached to birth, should not pains and penalties? she asked. Was it worse to be a doomed Annesley than the offspring of a criminal or the inheritor of fatal disease, like the family at the "Traveller's Rest?"

"I think I would rather be an Annesley," she added, turning to Paul with a smile that seemed to reach the darkest recesses of his heart, and kindle a glow of vital warmth within him.

Then they fell to discussing the Gledesworth legend. In the days of King John a lord of Gledesworth died, leaving one young son, and his brother, not content with seizing the lands, drove the widow and orphan from his door. One day in the hard winter weather, the widow appeared in want at the usurper's gates and begged bread for the starving child. And because she was importunate, the wicked baron set his hounds upon them and they killed the heir. Then the widow cursed the cruel baron, fled into the forest and was seen no more. But from that hour Gledesworth lands never descended to the eldest son; so

surely as a man owned Gledesworth, sorrow of some kind beset him ; the land was a curse to its owner, as was the Nibelungen Hoard to whomsoever possessed it.

The morally weak point in the curse, as Gervase often observed, when beguiled to discuss the tragic stories of that fated line, was that there appeared to be no chance of expiating the wicked baron's misdeeds, while the number of innocent victims who suffered from the curse was appalling.

" You are a hardened sceptic," Paul said. " Besides, you forget the 'stonen celle.' "

" Worse still. Because no owner of Gledesworth likes to exchange it for a stone cell, are all his descendants to be doomed ? "

" You cannot measure a retribution which for good and for ill extends into the infinite, by the events of a rudimentary and finite world," Alice said.

" Quite so," replied Paul ; " I confess to a great affection for the family curse. It keeps the idea of God before men's minds, though only a God of retribution," an observation which cheered Mrs. Rickman's kind heart, troubled as it was by sad rumours of Annesley's scepticism, and led on to a discussion in which they all lost themselves in the old interminable puzzles of the origin of Evil, the limits of Fate and the bounds of Will, till the hall clock gave musical warning of the hour, and Paul took hasty leave, finding himself belated.

When he was gone, Alice drew a chair to her adopted mother's side and began to tell her what she had done all the afternoon, and was duly scolded for various lapses of memory. She had lived in that house from her thirteenth year, being an orphan placed there by her guardians, that she and Sibyl might benefit from each other's society, and they had studied and grown up together so happily, that Alice hoped, on becoming the mistress of her own little fortune a year hence, to remain with them.

" Stay a minute, Alice," Gervase said, when a few minutes later she was about to follow Mrs. Rickman upstairs. " If you are not tired, I should like you to let me rehearse my speech for the Liberal meeting next week."

Alice willingly acquiesced, but asked if it would not be better to wait for Sibyl's return.

He laughed, and said that Sibyl had already been treated to two rehearsals ; so Alice took up her station in the corner of the hall furthest from the staircase, which Gervase ascended till he reached the landing, behind the balustrade of which he stood

beneath a lamp and looked down into the wide echoing hall, the dark panelling of which was but faintly lighted by a swinging lamp in its centre, and by the fitful fire-glow. Alice was scarcely seen ; but not a gesture or look of Gervase could escape her, and she was surprised when, taking a roll of notes from his pocket and striking an attitude, his form dilated, his eyes kindled as they took a commanding glance of the wide space before him, and he sent his voice, which was in conversation harsh, echoing through the hall with a power which she had never suspected, and invested the political common-places which he uttered with a certain dignity. The cat sprang up in alarm ; Hubert rose and sat listening at his mistress's feet with a critical air ; Alice clapped her hands and cried "Hear, hear!" and "No, no!" at intervals, for a good half-hour. Then the door opened, and Sibyl returned from her choir practice and made an addition to the audience.

"And did you ever hear such rubbish in your life, Sibyl?" Alice asked, laughing.

"No," she replied, "I was never at a political meeting before."

CHAPTER III.

SHADOWS.

Edward Annesley, finding no trace of his cousin at Arden Cross, took the path indicated to him over the next link in the chain of downs, dismissing Gervase Rickman from his mind with a dim momentary remembrance of having seen and disliked him before.

Thus every day we pass men and women whose hearts leap and ache like our own, taking no more count of them than of the stones along our path, though any one of these may turn the current of our destiny and alter our very nature.

Perhaps this sturdy pedestrian did not think of anything ; most likely he rejoiced unconsciously in the keen live air of the downs, the sense of the infinite which moving on a height affords, the splendour of the shifting clouds, through which the setting sun was now breaking—touching Alice Lingard's face with a fresh glamour, as she walked unknown to Annesley by the side of the man whose pulses her presence so deeply stirred—and in the once-familiar but half-forgotten landscape, with its limits of hill and sea, its lake-like sheet of slate roofs down in the hollow where the confluence of two slow streams formed the river Mede.

The lake of blue roofs, brooded over by a dim cloud of misty smoke, out of which, slim and spirit-like, rose the tall white church tower, its western face touched by the sun's fleeting glow, was Medington, the old familiar town in which he had passed many a school-boy's holiday.

All was now familiar: the furze in which he and Paul once killed snakes and looked for rabbit-holes; the copses where they gathered nuts and blackberries; the heathy waste renowned for whortle-berries, and the hamlet with the stone bridge over its mirror-like stream, widening into a pond at the foot of the down, which fell there in an abrupt steep, down which the cousins had made many a rapid descent, tobogganing in primitive fashion. There stood the mill with its undershot wheel; the plaintive cry of the moor-hen issued from the dry sedge rustling in the March wind; all sorts of long-forgotten objects appeared and claimed old acquaintance with him. The chimes of the church clock came floating through the dim grey air like a friendly voice from far-off boyhood, and after a little musical melancholy prelude, struck six deep notes.

Without thinking, he took the old accustomed footpath through the fields by the stream and began singing some snatch of old song, forgotten for years. "Dear old Paul!" he mused. "Is he as unchanged as these fields?" He knew that was impossible; for the lads had spent a couple of years together at a French school, and had met several times in their manhood.

It was pleasant to find himself in the clean, wind-swept streets of the little town, where the lamps were every moment showing tiny points of yellow fire in the dusk, and the shop-windows were casting pale and scant radiance upon the almost deserted pavement; for even in the High Street the quiet town showed few passengers at this hour, and little was heard save the cries of children at play, and the occasional rumble of a cart and still more occasional roll of a carriage. No one knows what becomes of the inhabitants of small country towns when they are not going to church or to market; the houses stand along the streets, but rarely give any sign of life; the shops offer their merchandise apparently in vain.

He stopped before a large red-brick house, draped with graceful hangings of Virginia creeper, now a mass of bare brown branches rattling drily in the wind; a house which withdrew itself, as if in aristocratic exclusiveness, some yards back from the line of houses rising flush on the street, and was fenced from

intruders by a high iron railing, behind which a few evergreens grew half-stifled by the thick coating of dust upon their shining leaves. There were three doors, one on each side, and one approached by a flight of steps in the middle; on one of the side doors the word "Surgery," was painted, and upon the railings was a brass plate, with "Paul Annesley, Surgeon, &c.," engraved upon it.

He was admitted by the central door into a large hall occupying the whole depth of the house, and having a glass garden-door on its opposite side. He had scarcely set foot within it when a door on his right opened, and from its comparative darkness there issued into the radiance of the lamp-lit hall a tall and stately woman, with snow-white hair, and large bright, blue eyes. Save her snowy hair, she showed no sign of age; her step was elastic, her figure erect as a dart.

"How do you do, Aunt Eleanor?" said Edward, going up to her and kissing the still blooming cheeks offered for his salute. "I missed Paul, as you see. How well you are looking!"

Mrs. Annesley held his hands and looked into his face with a seraphic smile, while she replied to his salutations, and said, with formal cordiality—

"Welcome, dear nephew, welcome to our dwelling. Paul should have been here to receive you, but his medical duties have doubtless detained him. You know what martyrs to duty medical men are. You may remember your dear uncle's life, with its constant interruptions."

"Yes, I remember," returned Edward, not dreaming that his cousin's medical duties at that moment consisted in drinking tea in the firelight and talking to a most attractive young woman. "I suppose you never know when to expect Paul."

"Never," she said, taking Edward's arm and walking with a slow step and rustling dress into the drawing-room, which was darkened by heavy curtains in the windows, and was only lighted by the fitful gleam of the fire. "Indeed, my life would be very sad and solitary but for the happiness it gives me to think that my dearest child is of so much use to his fellow-creatures. That, dear Edward, is my greatest consolation," and Mrs. Annesley sank with the air of a saintly empress or imperial saint upon her throne-like arm-chair by the fire, and sighed softly and smiled sweetly as she arranged the white-satin strings of her delicate cap, which bore but a traditional resemblance to the widow's cap she had long since discarded as unbecoming.

Having dutifully placed a footstool for her, he took his seat on the opposite side of the fire, and began losing himself in admiration and wonder of his seraphic and dignified aunt just as he had done in his boyhood, indeed something of his boyhood's awe returned to him in the fascination of her presence.

She still sat as upright as in those days ; neither arm-chair nor footstool were needed, save as adjuncts to her dignity. Every little detail of her dress showed the exactitude and finish that only women conscious of a power to charm bestow on such trifles : there was old rich lace in her cap and about her neck ; a few costly jewels, old friends of Edward's, were in her dress, there was a ring on her hand, the diamonds in which caught the firelight and broke it into a thousand tiny fierce flames ; when she smiled, her well-formed lips showed a row of perfect pearls. She was an imposing, as well as a handsome figure.

Her nephew gazed earnestly at her for some time, while she went on in her smooth and gentle tones, asking after his mother and sisters, and telling him various little items of family news ; while the firelight played upon the soft richness of her dress, and drew sparkles from her eyes and her jewels, and threw her shadow, as if in impish mockery, distorted into the changing shapes of old witch-like women, on to the wall behind her.

"Well, Aunt," he said at last, "I need not ask if you are well. You don't look a day older than you used to. I have done nothing but admire you for the last ten minutes."

"So, sir," she returned, smiling, "you have already learnt the arts of your profession, and know how to flatter. Fie on you, to practise on your old aunt ! And pray, how many young ladies have you bereaved of their hearts in this manner ?"

"None," he replied, laughing. "I am not a lady-killer. I am put down as a slow fellow."

"Nay, my dear kinsman ; I cannot believe that the ladies of these days have such bad taste. You have grown into such a tall fellow, you remind me of my sainted husband."

"My mother thinks me like my Uncle Walter," he replied, wondering by what process his lamented uncle had been canonized after death, since during his life his injured wife accounted him the greatest of sinners ; "an ugly likeness, she tells me with cruel candour. Here comes a carriage. Is it Paul's ?" he added, going to the window and looking into the dimly-lighted street. "What a capital cob !"

The Admiral, as the cob was called, brought his rapid trot to

a sudden end by sitting down on his haunches before the door, and in the same instant Paul leapt to the pavement and sprang up the steps with a rapidity which in some men would have been undignified, but in him only gave assurance of boundless vitality.

Edward went to meet him, and led him into the room and with him a breath of the fresh night air and a suggestion of healthy manhood and out-of-door life.

They met with less of the savage indifference which Englishmen usually think fit to assume to welcome their best friends; they shook hands more than once, and smiled. Paul even said that he was delighted to see his dear Ted, that it felt like old times to see his honest face, and that he hoped he would be able to extend the brief visit he purposed making; while Edward avowed that it did him good to see his dear old Paul, and that he was glad to find the old fellow looking so jolly. Then they shook hands again, and the firelight danced upon Paul's irregular features and dark fiery blue eyes, and brought into unusual prominence a white scar beneath his left eye.

Edward remembered how Paul got that scar, and felt cold chills running over him.

After one more mighty grasp of his cousin's hand, Paul turned to his mother, who presented each cheek to him as she had done to Edward, and solemnly blessed him, as if he had been absent for months, or was at least a Spartan son returning with his shield rather than upon it. Then Paul enquired with an air of deep solicitude about various evil symptoms with which she appeared to have been afflicted in the morning, and was informed that all had happily yielded to treatment, save one.

"I still have that dreadful feeling of constriction across my eyes," she said, in a tone of mournful resignation.

"Have you, indeed?" returned Paul, earnestly. "Perhaps a little wine and your dinner may remove it. If not, I will give you a draught. I will take Ned at once to his room, and then we can dine without delay."

Edward's surprise at finding his blooming aunt the victim of so many dreadful pains was forgotten in the lively chat of the dinner-table, as well as in the great satisfaction that meal afforded him after his long walk.

"Your renown has already preceded you, Edward," Paul observed. "Arden is already full of your arrival."

"Arden? Why I saw no soul there!"

"No? Have you forgotten the sign-post?"

"What! was that squint-eyed fellow an acquaintance of yours?" he asked.

"What do you think of that, mother, as a description of honest Gervase Rickman?" said Paul.

"You don't mean to say that was Gervase Rickman?" exclaimed Edward. "I thought I had some faint remembrance of him. Heaven only knows what I said about his father! If he recognized me, why on earth couldn't he say so?"

"He was not sure till he described you to me. By the way, mother, I forgot to say why I was late. I met Rickman, and had to turn in at Arden."

It is thus that Love demoralizes; nothing else would have made Paul Annesley invent lies, especially useless ones. His mother looked amused at his demure face, then she glanced at Edward and laughed.

"And how *was* dear Sibyl?" she asked, with satirical gravity.

"Sibyl? oh! I believe she was very well. She was out. You remember little Sibbie, Ned?" Paul said, tranquilly.

"A little mischievous imp who was always teasing us? Oh! yes, I daresay I should scarcely recognize her now. Is she grown into a beauty?"

"Are not all ladies beautiful?" returned Paul. "You shall go over and judge for yourself before long."

"I heard a sad piece of news at Arden," he continued; "Captain Annesley is dead."

"Who was he?" asked Edward indifferently. "There was an Annesley in the 100th Hussars; I never met him."

Mrs. Annesley flushed deeply and said nothing for a few minutes. Paul looked at her, and the unspoken thought flashed from one to the other, "this brings us very near the Gledesworth inheritance."

"How very sad!" she said at last, in rather a hard voice, while Paul bit his lips and then drank some wine, half ashamed at the interpretation of the swift glance.

"It is important that you should know who Captain Annesley was, Edward," he said after a minute, "because, after me, you are the next heir to the infant son he leaves."

"This is ghastly; the idea of my being your heir!" replied Edward, who was speedily enlightened as to the exact relationship, and properly refreshed on the subject of the half-forgotten

legend, in which he apparently took but a languid interest, and the conversation presently drifted to other topics.

After dinner Mrs. Annesley played some sonatas, and Edward sang some songs to her accompaniment till Paul, who had been up the night before, and in the open air all day, sank into a sweet slumber. The other two sat chatting in low tones, Edward describing his life as an artillery officer in a seaport town not far off, discussing his chances of promotion and his next brother's progress at Woolwich, and hearing of Paul's position, which was not a happy one. Dr. Walter Annesley's partner, who had carried on the business since his death, unluckily died soon after Paul began to practice with him, thus leaving Paul to make his way single-handed. Patients distrusted his youth and went to older men, so that things were not going as smoothly as could be wished, and the business scarcely paid Paul's personal expenses. So they chatted till the servants appeared, and Mrs. Annesley read prayers, first asking Paul if he felt equal to performing the task himself after his labours, which he did not.

"Come along and have a smoke," said Paul with alacrity, when his mother had bidden them good-night. "I smoke in the consulting-room."

"Why there?" asked Edward, doubtfully.

"Well! you see it is the only place. I dare not smoke anywhere else. I tell the patients it ensures them against infection, and receive the old ladies in the dining-room. I was nervous about her reception of you. But, I see you are in high favour."

"She seems perfectly angelic," replied Edward, selecting a cigar from the box offered him. "By the way, I had no idea she was in delicate health."

Paul laughed. "I doubt if any woman in the three kingdoms enjoys such brilliant health as my dear mother," he replied, "but she is never happy without some fancied ailment. I give a little coloured water and a few bread-pills from time to time."

He did not add that Mrs. Annesley's ailments were in an inverse ratio to her amiability, and formed a good domestic barometer.

Just then there was a tap at the door, and a soft voice said, "May I come in?"

"Certainly," replied Paul in some trepidation, and his mother entered.

"I will not intrude, dear children," she said; "I merely come

to tell Edward on no account to rise for our early breakfast unless he feels quite rested, and to bring him this little gift of my working." She vanished with a "God bless you, dear boys," before her nephew had time to thank her, after which both young men breathed more freely, and Edward took an embroidered velvet cap from his parcel.

"Poke the fire, Ned," Paul said cheerfully, when the door closed after her. Then he opened a closet where stood a skeleton partially draped in a dressing-gown, which the fleshless arm, extended as if in declamation, threw back from the ghastly figure, and crowned by a smoking-cap rakishly tipped on one side on its skull. "Let's be jolly for once, 'have a rouse before the morn.'" He transferred the dressing-gown from the bare bones to his own strong young shoulders, and the cap from the grinning skull to his dark-curled brow, beneath which the cruel scar showed. Perhaps it was Edward's fancy, excited by the suggestive revelation of the skeleton, which made the scar appear unusually distinct and livid; perhaps it was only the light.

"My aunt *has* made me a howling swell," he said, looking at the embroidered cap before he put it on. "Awfully kind of her."

"She is kind," commented Paul, his temporary gaiety vanishing as quickly as it came; "no woman has a more heavenly disposition than my dear mother when free from those attacks, which are probably the result of some cerebral lesion."

"Perhaps," Edward suggested hopefully, "she may grow out of them with advancing years."

"Perhaps," sighed Paul. "But all the Mowbrays are the same, you know. It is in the blood. My uncle Ralph Mowbray was offended with my father once, and he laid awake at nights for six weeks concocting the most stinging phrases he could think of for a letter he wrote him. I'll show you that letter some day."

"Well! I hope it will never break out in you, Paul," said Edward, incautiously.

"I, my dear fellow?" replied Paul, with his good-tempered smile, "there is no fear for me. I am a pure-bred Annesley."

"Ah!" said Edward, and looking reflectively at the fire.

"There has not been a serious explosion since New Year's Eve," continued Paul, clasping his hands above his head, and looking at the chimney-piece, which was adorned with a centrepiece of a skull and cross-bones, flanked by several stethoscopes

and other mysterious and wicked-looking instruments, and above which was the smiling portrait of a lovely little girl, with a strong likeness to Mrs. Annesley. "You know how I valued the Parian Psyche of Thorwaldsen's you gave me? She knew it, for she took it in both hands and dashed it on the hearth."

Edward again felt cold chills creeping over him, and his gaze followed Paul's to the dimpled child-face he had loved, Paul's only sister Nelly, whose end had been so tragic.

"And what did you do?" he asked.

"Oh! I just sent the Crown Derby tea-service after it," replied Paul, "so pray don't notice the absence of either."

"She valued the tea-service," said Edward, inwardly thankful that the fiery Mowbray blood did not flow in his veins.

"Imagine the smash," said Paul, pensively. "And the deed was scarcely done when, with a tap at the door, in walks the vicar and stares aghast at the Lares and Penates shattered on the drawing-room hearth. My mother turns to him with the most heavenly smile and wishes him a Happy New Year. 'And just see what that clumsy boy of mine has done,' she adds quietly, pointing to the fragments. 'Quite a genius for upsetting things, dear child.'

"I thought I heard something fall," replies the innocent vicar, quoting the lines about 'mistress of herself though China fall,' and congratulating me on having a mother with such a sweet temper."

Edward mused for some time on the misery of his cousin's life, a misery rarely alluded to by Paul himself, and any allusion to which on Edward's part he would have deeply resented. He knew that the chain must be pressing heavily for him thus to disburden himself, and he suggested that he should marry and have a quiet home of his own; to which Paul replied, mournfully, that he was not yet in a position to set up housekeeping.

"Though indeed——" he added, and suddenly stopped.

"Well?"

"It seems so brutal to build on a baby's death," he replied; "and yet——"

"It alters your position, Paul," said Edward, "and being sentimental about it won't keep the baby alive."

"True."

"I think I may assume that the 'unexpressive She' has already been found," Edward said, remembering the dark hints during dinner, and Paul smiled mysteriously.

"Perhaps I may meet her at Arden?"

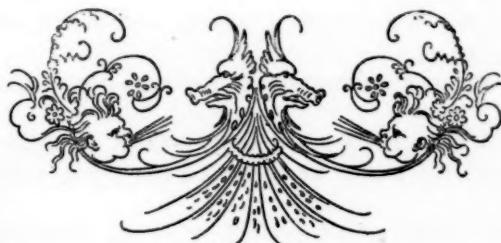
"Who knows? But I have never yet spoken. I am not entitled by my prospects to do so. I don't know if I have the smallest chance. And when you see her, Ned," he added, with some hesitation, "perhaps you will remember——"

Edward burst out laughing and grasped his cousin's hand.

"Don't be afraid," he replied, "I am not a lady's man; and if I were, Aphrodite herself would not tempt me to spoil other people's little games."

"Remember your promise," said Paul solemnly, and they separated for the night, Edward wishing his cousin success, and thinking as he took his way upstairs that whatever Miss Sibyl Rickman's character might be, the Rickman blood was reputed to be an eminently mild and tranquil fluid, well calculated to temper the fire of such of the terrible Mowbray strain as might have been transmitted to Paul.

(*To be continued.*)



The Invincible Armada, 1588.

'TIS a fair eve at midsummer, three hundred years ago,
Drake and his bold sea captains all are out on Plymouth Hoe ;
They are busy at bowls, brave gentlemen, with jovial mirth and
jest,
When watching eyes spy far away a sail upon the West.

A sail ! ten sail ! a hundred sail ! nay nigh two hundred strong !
And up the sea they swiftly climb in battle order long ;
Their high main-royals rake the skies, as in a crescent wide,
Like a thick wood, full seven miles broad, they sail on side
by side.

There is swift alarm and hurry then, but never a thought of fear,
As the seamen, with the falling night, behold the Don draw
near.

"Ring out the bells," cries Hawkins, and across the darkling
main,
England peals out defiance to the gathered hosts of Spain.

They do not fear the Don, not they, who on the Spanish main,
Have fought his might and lowered his pride, again and yet
again ;

And yet 'tis fearful odds they face, when they sail forth to meet,
Spain and her great Armada with the puny English fleet.

And the streets grow thronged with seamen, and the crowds
begin to shout,

And quick oars dash and sails are set, before the stars come out
They weigh their anchors with a will, and out they speed to sea,
Where up the Channel, stately, slowly, forge the enemy.

Now St. George for merry England, and St. James for Papal Spain,
Our seamen are our chiefest hope, nor shall we trust in vain.
We have quenched the fires of Smithfield, and no more, 'fore God, we swear,
Shall they ever again flame upward, through our sweet, free, English air.

Now when they neared the foeman, as he loomed across the sea,
Lord Howard led the English van, a Catholic Lord was he,
And his great Ark Royal thundered out her broadsides loud and long,
With Drake and Frobisher hard by, and heroes in a throng.

But never a gun the Spaniards fired, but silent pressed and slow,
As some great herd of bisons on the rolling prairies go ;
And behind them close, like hunters swift, with hounds that snarl and bite,
The English squadrons followed through the breezy summer night.

They could see the Dons' high lanterns, in a brilliant crescent flare,
They could catch the black friars' moaning chant upon the midnight air.
All night they pressed them close, and ere the sun began to flame,
Long miles away, by blue Torbay, the warring galleons came.

Soon as the dawn began to glow, the guns began to roar,
All day the thundering navies fought along the Dorset shore,
Till Portland frowned before them, in the distance dark and grim,
And again the night stole downward, and the ghostly cliffs grew dim.

And already, praised be God who guides the patriots' noble strife,
Though not an English flag is lost, and scarce an English life,
De Valdez yields his ship and sword, and into Weymouth bay,
They tow Oquenda's burning bark, the galleon of Biscay.

Day fades in night, mid stress of fight, and when to waking eyes,
 Freshwater's ghostly sea cliffs, and the storm-worn Needles rise,
 From a score of sheltered inlets on the smiling Solent sea,
 England comes forth to aid her sons, with all her chivalry.

There sails my Lord of Cumberland, and he of Oxford too,
 Brave Raleigh and Northumberland, and Grenville and Carew.
 As to a field of honour hasten knights of deathless fame,
 To meet the blue blood of Castile, the flower of England came.

Then with the wind, the foe faced round, and hissing o'er the
 blue,

Forth from his lofty broadsides vast his hurtling missiles flew ;
 Long time the fight confusedly raged, each man for his own hand ;
 St. George ! protect our country, and the freedom of our land !

See here round brave Ricaldes the English levies press !

See there the ships from London town, hemmed round and in
 distress !

Such thunder sure upon the seas was never heard before,
 As the great ordnance smite the skies with one unceasing roar !

Now when the fifth day of the fight was come, St. James's Day,
 The sea was like a sheet of glass, the wind had died away,
 And from out the smoke clouds looming down, churning the
 deep to foam,

Driven by three hundred oars the towering galliasses come.

But ere they neared the English line, a furious iron hail
 Of chain-shot and of grape-shot crashed through mast and oar
 and sail,

No more they could, they turned and fled, not yet upon the sea,
 Was seen such furious hatred, or such stubborn bravery.

And upon the steep white walls of cliff and by the yellow sand,
 With pike and musket hurrying down the sturdy peasants stand,
 And the trembling women kneel and call upon the Holy name,
 And watch the thick black cloud which breaks in murderous
 jets of flame.

Now St. George for our old England, for the Don has turned and
 fled,

With many a strong ship sunk or burnt, and gallant seaman dead,
 And by the last day of the week, the warring squadrons lie,
 The foemen moored in Calais roads, the English watching by.

They sent for aid to Parma, for they were sore beset,
But the Duke was at St. Mary's shrine, and could not succour
yet,
For by Nieuwport and by Dunkirk, stern, immovable as Fate,
With stalwart ships, and ordnance strong, the Dutchmen guard
the gate.

Now that great Sabbath dawns at last, and from the foeman's
fleet,
The deep mass-music rises, and the incense sickly-sweet,
And beneath the flag of England too, with dauntless hearts and
high,
The seamen take the bread and wine, and rise prepared to die.

Then came Lord Henry Seymour, with a message from Her
Grace,
And Sir Francis read the missive with grave triumph on his
face,
And he sware an oath, that come what would, her orders should
be done
Before the early rose of dawn proclaimed the coming sun.

And the summer daylight faded, and 'twas midnight on the
wave,
And among the close-moored galleons, all was silent as the
grave,
And the bright poop lanterns rose and fell with the breathing of
the deep,
And silent rode the towering hulls, with the weary crews asleep.

When two brave men of Devon, for Sir Francis bade them go,
With all sail set before the wind, stole down upon the foe ;
And before the drowsy watchmen woke, the swift destruction
came,
As with a blaze of wildfire leapt the fireships into flame !

Then from the close-thronged ships of Spain loud cries of
terror rise,
As from their burning ranks the glare flares upward to the skies,
With cables cut, and sails half set, they drift into the night,
And many are crushed, and many burn, and some are sunk
outright.

And the watchers on the Dover Cliffs know well what thing has been,

And for noble England cheer aloud, and for her Maiden Queen.
No more, no more, great England, shalt thou bow thy head again
Beneath the Holy Office and the tyranny of Spain.

And the conquering English followed, and upon the Flanders shore,

Hopeless the shattered galleons fought, till fight they could no more. [helplessly]

And some went down with all their crews, and some beat Upon the yeasty quicksands of the perilous Northern Sea.

Then Sidonia with the remnant, shattered ships and wounded men,
Fled northward, with the foe in chase, hoping for Spain again ;
But by the Orkneys, lo ! the Lord blew with a mighty wind,
And on the cruel Irish West they left two score behind.

And the savage kerns of Desmond, when the stormy winds were o'er,

Robbed the thronged corpses of the great, upon the lonely shore.
There, in his gold-laced satins, lay the Prince of Asculi,
Mid friars, and seamen drowned and dead, and Dons of high degree.

Or faint with hunger and with thirst, though rescued from the wave,

The haughty Spaniard knew in turn the misery of the slave.
They ate the captives' bitter bread, they who brief weeks ago
Sailed forth in high disdain and pride to lay our England low.

And the scattered remnant labouring back to Spain and life again,

Left fourscore gallant ships behind and twice ten thousand men ;
And when in dole and misery this great emprise was done,
There was scarce a palace in all Castile which did not mourn a son.

Let not their land forget the men who fought so good a fight !
Still shall our England keep undimmed their fame, their memory bright.

And if again the foemen come in power upon the main,
May she find sons as strong as those who broke the might of Spain !

LEWIS MORRIS.

Foundation Stones of English Music.*

I.

CHURCH MUSIC AND MUSICIANS.—HENRY VIII. TO ELIZABETH.

“Whom God loueth not, they loue not musique.”—MORLEY, 1598.

TIME was when a Venetian ambassador, writing from the Court of Henry VIII., could say of English Church music, “The Mass was sung by His Majesty’s Choristers, whose voices are more heavenly than human ; they did not chaunt like men, but like angels.” Such was the verdict of an accomplished Italian on our national music of the sixteenth century, for this criticism did not only apply to the singing, but also to what was sung. In those days English composition had a right to the hearing it received ; not only had it a right, but it was preferred by the King and by the nation. The English musical position at that date quite equalled its continental neighbours. Previous to the well-known names of Tallis and Byrd, we possessed a composer, Robert Whyte, whose works are on a level with those of Palestrina, whom he preceded. How many English amateurs of the present day are acquainted with Palestrina’s works ? Numbers, we should unhesitatingly affirm. In the meantime, hardly any of those of Robert Whyte are even published, though a good collection of his MSS. are to be found in the Christ Church library at Oxford, from whence no enterprising national feeling has ever cared to unearth them.

Why, as a nation, we are not prouder of the few national musical monuments of which we might so justly boast, is, and always

* The following pages are written solely with the idea of calling the attention of the general reader to forgotten and unappreciated music. They are not intended for those who are skilled in musical literature, but for the perusal of the ordinary public.—A. M. W.

has been, an inexplicable riddle. We perform works of all nations, except those of our own old masters, on endless occasions ; the latter are generally unpublished, and as a rule unperformed ; so though we possess an early musical school equal to any, (to quote foreign testimony, "L'Angleterre, qui possédait alors une belle école musicale, conservant son rang, pendant près d'un siècle," *) we leave it out in the cold, and are then astonished and annoyed at being described by continental opinion as a rule, and by a German critic in particular, as "ein durch und durch unmusicalisches Land." † Why do not the Choral Societies of our country take a pride in producing some of the services, anthems, motets, psalms, and other works of such men as Tallis, Tye, Whyte, and Byrd ? We are aware that in some instances they would have (to our shame be it written) to be printed,‡ and some trouble taken about them ; but a few energetic choral conductors, possessed of a little national pride, could speedily overcome any small obstacles regarding their production, and would certainly be amply repaid for their trouble. In London there has already been a partial revival of some of our old masters' works, but that, unfortunately, does not constitute a national revival, and is more or less confined to a few enterprising musicians and a public of musical antiquarians ; neither does it refer, as far as we are aware, to the sacred music alluded to in the present article. We are only too prone to think that London represents our musical position to the world, and to be quite satisfied with such a position ; the metropolis may and no doubt does all it can to stimulate enthusiasm for English art, but a much more widespread feeling must develop throughout our country before our great musical period can really be placed in the position it deserves.

Can it be possible that this general public, without whose support nothing can succeed, hardly knows the names, much less the works, of their own countrymen, and hence does not think of demanding them ? It will certainly do no harm to go upon such a supposition here, and it is perhaps the kindest view one can take of the want of enthusiasm and national feeling for English music of which we complain.

* The Flemish and Italian schools were justly proud of their

* Lavoix, 'Histoire de la Musique.'

† Ambros.

‡ When I speak of these works not being printed, I mean they are inaccessible to the general public. I am of course aware of the Antiquarian Society's collections, and the examples given by Hawkins and Burney, &c.

early masters, and they have been glad to own them the foundation of greater later development. *We* have every reason to be as justly proud of our early art: Dr. Burney tells us, "Indeed, I have been able to find in all my researches no choral compositions in other parts of Europe of equal antiquity superior to those which have been preserved of these authors (Tallis and Bird), the pride of our country and the honour of their profession." But, alas! we do not show our "pride" in the only way we could, by performing and recognizing the works of those who deserve the best position we could give them.

With the hope of stimulating some small interest in what ought to be a source of national pride and profit, we will try to turn the attention of the many "general readers" interested in music back to our musical home surroundings in the time of Henry VIII., when English music began slowly but surely to build up that famous position which reached its height in the reign of Elizabeth. King Henry himself was no small musician, one or two of his compositions having come down to us in Mr. Stafford Smith's valuable "Musica Antiqua." Dr. Burney alludes to two motets attributed to the King, one of which he will allow to have been his composition, the other he evidently considers beyond the powers of a prince! Be that as it may, much to his credit the King encouraged all that was best in the music and musicians of his time, and, as we have already heard, the services of his chapel were on a scale of magnificence seldom known in those days. Even after his quarrel with the Pope, Henry, who, besides his love for music, had a great weakness for show and grandeur, maintained the chapel choir in all its former sumptuousness, and went so far as to compose two complete masses himself.

The setting of the English Litany to the ancient plain song simplified by Archbishop Cranmer, may be said to have been the commencement of a new era in Church music. There is a curious letter of Cranmer's to the King, given by Burney, with reference to this setting, which concludes thus, "Nevertheless, those that be cunning in singing can make a much more solemn note thereto; I made them only for a proof, to see how English would do in a song." Notwithstanding the Archbishop's modesty, he had struck the first note of English Church music when, in 1544, his Litany was brought out, curiously enough, just a year before his successor in the same work, the musician John Merbecke, narrowly escaped a heretic's death

from too great devotion to the reformed religion. Of Merbecke's great work, the setting of the Liturgy, we shall have occasion to speak later, as it belongs to the time of Edward VI.; but before leaving the reign of Henry VIII., two Church composers claim our attention. Robert Fayrfax and John Taverner held the most important positions musically at this date. The former took his degree at Cambridge in 1504, and seven years afterwards, when holding the post of organist at St. Alban's, received the same distinction at Oxford. Those of his compositions of which we are able to judge take a good position with other masters of that period: some are to be found in the British Museum, others in the Oxford Music School. John Taverner was also a well-known composer in his day, and was organist at Christ Church, Oxford. Specimens of his compositions are given by both Burney and Hawkins, showing a good deal of ingenuity and contrapuntal skill. Melody does not appear to have been considered necessary in the Church compositions of that date, and indeed was not attempted. With Taverner we must close this very rapid sketch of music in the reign of Henry VIII., important not so much from what it has left us, as enabling us to realize at once the position of music previous to a great period later in the same century.

The reign of Edward VI., short as it was, has left us one great musical monument accomplished in 1550—that setting of the first English Book of Common Prayer to music by John Merbecke, to which we have already referred. To this day the Nicene Creed and the "Gloria" are still in use in our churches, and are distinguished for a simple majesty, causing them to remain now, as they were then, the foundation of English Church music, the commencement of a school of which we may indeed be justly proud. We come next to Dr. Tye, a well-known musical character throughout four reigns; he was the musical instructor of Edward VI., and seems to have held in every way a most important position among his contemporaries. A couplet from an old play written at the time tells us:

"England one God, one Truth, one Doctor hath
For Musick's art, and that is Doctor Tye."

Dr. Tye's finest work is the anthem "I will exult Thee," published in Boyce's collection. Hawkins considers it "a most perfect model for composition in the Church style, whether we regard the melody or the harmony, the expression or the con-

trivance, or, in a word, the general effect of the whole." Dr. Tye also set to music the first fourteen chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, turning them into rough verse himself. A great deal of his music has been lost, but there are fine specimens in the collections of Barnard and Boyce, and a very beautiful evening service of his was printed by Dr. Rimbault. Tye may be said to have been foremost in the restoration of Church music, which had received a terrible blow at the Dissolutions of the Abbeys. He was organist at Windsor, and seems to have been in his later days rather a crabbed old privileged person, for it is told by Anthony Wood that Queen Elizabeth, when displeased by his music, "would send the verger to tell him that he played out of tune, whereupon he sent word that her ears were out of tune."

We have already referred to Robert Whyte, who preceded the greatest names of this epoch (Tallis and Byrd), a composer whose works being English, of course, are unpublished, but who at an earlier date than Palestrina equalled in every way that great musician with whose works Whyte's seem to have much in common. Morley speaks of him as "one of famous Englishmen who have been nothing inferior to the best composers on the Continent;" and Dr. Burney adds his testimony in the following words: "No musician had then appeared who better deserved to be celebrated for knowledge of harmony and clearness of style than Robert Whyte." Notwithstanding, his works are allowed to remain as curiosities in the library of Christ Church, Oxford, and our Palestrina is almost unknown.

The reign of Queen Elizabeth, which has been justly called the Augustan age of English music, saw the firm establishment of the English Prayer-book, giving a great impetus to all composers of Church music, who were now required to find suitable music to attach to it. Cranmer and Merbecke had given it Melody, but Harmony was still required for the services of our Church, and doubtless the special interest of the new Liturgy and all its musical possibilities must have had great influence in forming the style and placing the ambitions of such men as Tallis and Byrd. Tallis, it is said, always remained a Roman Catholic, but, notwithstanding, he could not fail to be impressed with the beautiful Liturgy then first receiving its musical clothing, and his grand service in D minor (some portions of which are to be found in Dr. Boyce's collection) is considered "a type and model of what an Anglican service should be." But the great work by which Tallis will for ever

be remembered is his ‘Song of Fourty Parts,’ a perfectly unequalled curiosity. Dr. Burney devotes much space to the description of what he terms this “Polyphonic Phenomenon.” He says: “All these several parts, as may be imagined, are not in simple counterpoint, or filled up in mere harmony without meaning or design, but have each a share in the short subjects of fugue and imitation which are introduced upon every change of words. . . . All the fourty real parts are severally introduced in the course of thirty-nine bars, when the whole vocal phalanx is employed at once during six bars more.”* Tallis died in 1585, and was buried in Greenwich Church, where a curious epitaph was put up to his memory, of which a couple of verses must suffice.

“Entered here doth ly a worthy wyght,
Who for long tyme in musick bore the bell,
His name to shew was Thomas Tallis hyght,
An honest virtuous lyff he did excell.”
* * * * *

“As he dyd live so also dyd he dye,
In mild and quyet sort, O happy man,
To God full oft for mercy dyd he cry,
Wherfore he lyves, let deth do what he can.”

The favourite pupil of Tallis, and a no less celebrated musician, was William Byrd, of whose life less even is known than of most of these great men. A good many of his services and anthems do remain to us, however, in the collections of Barnard and Boyce. A well-known and very grand specimen of his work is the anthem “Bow down thine ear, O Lord.” We are told by Peacham, in his ‘Compleat Gentleman’ (1622), that “For motettes and musicke of pietie and devotion, as well for the honor of our nation, as the merit of the man, I prefer above all other our *Phænix*, Mr. William Byrd, whom in that kind I know not whether any may equal.”

Space will not allow more than reference to one other of the sacred composers of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, but special mention must be made of Richard Farrant, who, with Tallis and Byrd, was an honour to the remarkable school of the period. He was entirely a writer of Church music, and those of his

* This choral curiosity is to be seen in the library at Christ Church, Oxford. Why might not we of the present generation have an opportunity of hearing it at some festival? If to our modern ears it sounded somewhat quaint and dry, it would still be of great interest in showing us to what extent our old masters carried their contrapuntal excellence, and give us an opportunity of judging how worthy they were of being our musical foundation stones.

anthems that remain to us are full of solemn pathos : we need only mention, " Hide not Thou Thy face, O Lord," and " Call to remembrance, O Lord, Thy tender mercies " (both of which are published), as examples of his style from which every one may form their own judgment. He was a gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and organist of St. George's, Windsor. How one wishes that "gentleman of the Chapel Royal," if such a title were in use now, meant, as in old times, the best musician and the greatest encouragement from those in high places.

We cannot close this sketch of one branch of music in our greatest English period without appealing again to the general public to *insist* on hearing some of our old English classics. Surely no English festival ought to take place without the production of one English ancient composition on each occasion. A representative piece of our own classical school ought most certainly to be placed before each rising generation at every representative musical gathering. When Leeds and Birmingham, Edinburgh, the Three Choirs, and Norwich, give us their wonderful performance of some motet or Psalm of our Elizabethan School, then and then only will our old masters be placed in the position they deserve, and the revival of their works, having in this manner become worthy to be called national, would ensure a position of respect for English musical art in the past, giving us a claim, as it were, to attain to a foremost rank in the future, which most assuredly we held in the sixteenth century. Let us only have the opportunity to compare our Elizabethan writings with those of our continental neighbours of the same date, and we shall find that in bygone days we had no reason to fear the rivalry of other nations, and that the English music of Elizabeth "was a very brilliant epoch in the History of Sweet Sounds." *

II.

MADRIGAL-TIME.

" I was aye telling you,
Auld songs would ding the new."

IN all arts there is some one period or individual occurrence which particularly touches the romantic side of our natures, and

* Such music as is printed (in cheap editions) of Fayrfax, Taverner, Tye, Tallis, Merbecke and Byrd is to be found in the sacred catalogue of Messrs. Novello & Co. ; of Robert Whyte's compositions there is not one example.

which, years after the reality has passed away, kindles our enthusiasm by the mere mention of its name. Such a period we believe to have existed in the art of English music by what is here termed madrigal-time. We picture to ourselves the old halls of England in the times of good Queen Bess : stately dames and gallant courtiers rise before our eyes ; hoops and ruffs, doublets, and hose make brilliant colouring against oak panels, with here and there the glisten of armour, and that nothing may be lacking to this brilliant spectacle, there is also brilliant sound. Some such madrigal as Morley's 'Now is the month of Maying,' flows on with its rare feeling of revelry, from no musical hirelings, but from the gay throng itself, proud to do honour to the English art of the day, to that music in which we stand now as we stood then—in the first and foremost rank as composers.

Where should we find such a gathering to give us that beautiful love-lorn, pastoral, or merry-making music at the present day? Instead of that, we spend £500 on a concert to give supposed satisfaction to a similar assembly, often with a very dire result musically, little remaining to us of the evening but a general sense of hurry as we scuffle on to something else, neither place, people, or performance having given us the slightest gratification. One of the simplest methods for the cultivation of musical taste we believe to be general participation in it when it forms an evening's entertainment. Why is a ball so much the most popular form of gathering? Because every one has his or her active share in the evening's proceedings. Will the time ever come again when general society will give us part music, as we have reason to believe it was given in the time of Elizabeth?—when the number of clefs, too, used by composers, must have doubled ordinary musical study? No one in those days was considered a properly constituted member of society unless he or she could at sight take a part in those famous choral productions. No mean standard of excellence either; a sorry hearing would be the result of an amateur or professional reading of them nowadays! Then nobody cared for solo singing; the ingenuity displayed in writing vocal music in many parts was eagerly welcomed by the Court and by the country, and to excel in the production and performance of such music was the highest ambition alike of the musicians and the amateur. Coming at a date when all that was great in poetry lay, as it were, before them, assisted by the real encouragement of Elizabeth not only as a Queen, but as a musician (if she ever performed half the pieces

contained in her Virginal Book), our madrigal writers were determined that the sister art should not be a whit behind the age in which it lived, and indeed they succeeded in their ambition. In this particular branch of music the English have never been excelled or, we venture to think, equalled by other nations.

For a period of some fifty years madrigals led the way in music in England, and were almost all for which popular taste asked. Their birthplace was of course Italy and the Netherlands, but it was the English composers who obtained for them the important position they held then, and continue to hold in the music of all ages.

Several derivations are allowed to the word in its character of combined music and poetry. Firstly, that it is taken from the Italian *madre*, meaning a poem addressed to our Lady, as is believed to have been the case with some of the earliest madrigals. Secondly, that it comes from the Latin word *mandra*, signifying sheepfold, alluding to the constantly pastoral character of the poems ; or, thirdly, that it is a corruption of *madrugada*—"the dawn," equivalent in Spanish to the Italian *mattinata*—"a morning song." These derivations may be left to the choice of the reader. Poetically speaking, a madrigal may be defined as the shortest form of lyrical poetry ; "Le Brun" defines it as an epigram without anything very brisk or very sprightly in its fall or close. Something very gallant and tender is usually the subject of it ; and a certain beautiful, noble, chaste simplicity forms its character. Musically, a madrigal may be defined as the setting to which this class of poem was composed, *moving in fugue or imitation* (therein differing from the part song which moves in chords), arranged for different voices, always without instrumental accompaniment, and heard to greatest advantage sung in small chorus. It may be interesting here to give the best description of, and direction for madrigal composition, written at its greatest period by one Thomas Morley—a name, we are glad to think, well known to-day in English musical circles.

As an authority, Morley certainly stood at the head of the noble list of writers of the time, and his opinion and advice are well worth quotation. His celebrated "Treatise," a "plaine and easie Introduction to Practicall Musick," was the earliest work on the subject ever printed. Speaking of madrigals, he writes thus : " As for the musicke, it is, next unto the motet, the most artificiall, and to men of Vnderstanding the most delightful. If therefore you will compose in this Kind, you must possess your-

self with an amorus humor (for in no cōposition shall you profue admirable, except you put on and possess yourselfe wholly with that vaine, wherein you compose some time wanton, sometime effeminat, you may maintaine points and reurt them, vse triplaes, and show the utmost of y^r varietie, and the more varietie yow show the better shall you please.") In addition, it may be said that "usually madrigals consist of only one movement (though occasionally they divide into two parts, as in Wilbye's 'Sweet Honey-sucking Bees'), flowing on evenly to its close without part division of any kind; they usually contained much contrapuntal imitation, but no regular fugue; and the various figures or passages were, for the most part, employed but once, new ones being introduced to suit each succeeding sentiments of the words." *

The first collection of madrigals ever printed in England was one from foreign sources, entitled, 'Musica Transalpina,' which contains the names of Palestrina, Luca Marenzio, and many others of the best Italian and Flemish composers of the time. This volume appeared in 1588, and in its preface, the word madrigal was, we believe, first used upon English printing ground, though before this date, some pieces of Byrd's had appeared of the madrigal character, also the well-known beautiful composition attributed to Richard Edwardes, "In going to my lonely bed," which was strictly in madrigal form, though the term itself was not applied to it by the author. However, after the production of 'Musica Transalpina,' many other volumes dedicated to madrigals rapidly appeared. A second book of Byrd's came first, and about 1595 two volumes of Morley's, one entitled, 'Madrigals to foure Voyces.' Thus the art of madrigal writing was fairly launched among us, and the English composers set to work to do all that lay within them to bring it to perfection.

Attention must now be called to the greatest collection of madrigals at their time of writing, after which we shall endeavour to refer to composers and compositions, which in our estimation constitute the greatest collection of madrigals for all time.

Queen Elizabeth must have been a very extraordinary and real influence in her day in many much smaller matters than the great affairs of State, in which we all know and acknowledge her sway.

* Naumann, 'History of Music.'

Imagine nowadays a lot of well-known musicians banding themselves together, and addressing to their Sovereign, under a feigned name, a number of amorous ditties, all being more or less in celebration and praise of Her Majesty ! Such, however, was the case in 1601, when undoubtedly the finest collection of madrigals that could be produced by the able pens of the time was offered to and accepted by her. Let us hope their performance superseded the terrible music of "twelve trumpets and two kettledrums ; which, together with fifes, cornets and side drums," we are told, "made the hall ring," (!) while Elizabeth dined ! The work was entitled, 'Madrigales, the Triumphs of Oriana,* to five and six voyces ; composed by divers severall aucthors,' and edited by Thomas Morley. There is a supposition that it was gathered together as some small solace to the Queen at the time of her sorrow for the execution of Essex ; such an idea may lend some extra trifle to the general romantic flavour of the period, but the practical result of the desire to amuse and distract Elizabeth was a collection of world-renowned madrigals, and without doubt their royal patronage had no small beneficial effect on the progress of the art. The contributions were twenty-six in number, and comprise all the best known names of madrigal writers, posterity having now decided their fame. This collection was reprinted in 1815, by William Hawes. We cannot help thinking that an exact reprint of it, in these days of wonderful facsimiles, as it was offered to the Queen, would be of great interest to the public, and that perhaps the unearthing of some long-neglected beauties might be the result. As far as we know, the best numbers contained in 'The Triumphs of Oriana,' are, "Hark, heard ye not the Heavenly Harmony ?" by Bateson, and, according to Dr. Burney, number twelve composed by William Cobbold, neither of them names which are to the front elsewhere. In fact, though this collection held the first place in its time, and was supposed to contain the very best efforts of the leading men, nothing therein approached in excellence a collection to which we shall presently refer. Perhaps, like much else written in a sense to order, the work was not composed "con amore," though its words and design are most decidedly intended to appear so ! Still excellence is a matter of comparison, and many pieces of the collection are more worthy of study and production than half the

* "Triumph" here meaning celebration of any real or imaginary personage.

worthless part songs we are in the habit of hearing nowadays. ‘The Triumphs of Oriana’ have all been printed in Clarke’s ‘Collection of Glees.’ And we cannot but think that an adequate rendering of the collection, as it was given to the Queen, would form a very interesting item in the music of 1888.

To return then to the founder of our madrigal music, Mr. Byrd. We have seen something of him as a Church composer, so now we have only to consider him as a madrigal writer, bearing in mind that his first publications in that form took place before the production of ‘Musica Transalpina,’ so that he may fairly be allowed to be the father of the English madrigal. The first book of his to which the title was allowed was ‘The Songs of Sundrie natures,’ printed in 1589 ; and these, Sir John Hawkins tells us, “were so well received, that from thenceforth those of the Italians began to be neglected.”

Byrd was not only a composer, but an instructor, and his reasons for persuading “every one to learn to sing” are so quaint and interesting in their connection with this time, that we cannot refrain from quoting them :—

“ 1stly. It is a knowledge easily taught and quickly learned, where there is a good master and a good scollar.

“ 2ndly. The exercise of singing is delightful in nature, and good to preserve the health of man.

“ 3rdly. It doth strengthen all parts of the breast, and doth open the pipes.

“ 4thly. It is a singular good remedie for a stuttering and stammering in the speech.

“ 5thly. It is the best means to procure a perfect pronunciation, and to make a good orator.

“ 6thly. It is the only way to know where nature hath bestowed a good voyce ; which gift is so rare, as there is not one in a thousand that hath it ; and in many that excellent gift is lost because they want art to express nature.

“ 7thly. There is not any musicke of instruments whatsoever comparable to that which is made of the Voyces of men where the voyces are good and the same well ordered and sorted.”

“ 8thly. The better the voyce is, the meeter it is to honor and serve God therewith ; and the voyce of man is chiefly to be employed to that ende.”

“ *Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum.*”

“ Since singing is so good a thing,
I wish all men would learn to sing.”

Such was a part of Byrd's preface to the book of part music which appeared in 1588. The prefaces of these times were no mere second frontispiece to be passed over, or, if perused at all, only in the most casual way ; they were the instruction books of their times and indeed of much later epochs. Many of us would do well to follow their plain, practical suggestions now. What better reasons can we give for practice to choirs of the present day, than the improvement of their chests and the service of God ? . Things were simple in those bygone times, and such reasons were accepted. Are we much better off now ? "Chi lo sa ?" As an example of Byrd's madrigal writing we cannot do better than mention, "Lullaby, my sweet little Babie," which has been recently printed by Messrs. Novello and Co., and referred to in a letter of the Earl of Worcester in 1602 as follows : "We are in frolic here at Court. . . . Irish tunes are at this time most pleasing, but in winter 'Lullaby,' an old song of Mr. Byrd's, will be more in request as I think," Byrd lived to the age of eighty-five, a veritable father of the English art of the day, beloved of his pupils and successors, and spoken of by them as a "loving Master never without reverence to be named of musicians."

We now come to the greatest madrigal writer the world has seen, John Wilbye, the composer of the two madrigals to which we are determined to give the first place, as indeed they have always held by their own virtue—"Stay, Corydon," and "Sweet Honey-sucking Bees." The most useful thing to be said about them is to exhort people to know them ; point after point of interest will be found in both. Anything more charming than the tenor lead of subject on the words, "Oh, beware of that," in the latter, followed in imitation by part after part pianissimo, could not well be written, diminishing still more until a new and equally interesting subject bursts forth with "For if one flaming dart."

Again, in "Stay, Corydon," what a wonderful point the alto voice gives out on the words, "for if thou follow her," part after part endeavouring musically to "follow her." Mr. Oliphant, in his excellent little book on madrigals, says, "I feel no hesitation in calling John Wilbye the first of madrigal writers." Sir John Hawkins gives in full a madrigal which he considers one of Wilbye's finest, "Ladie, when I behold," to which Fétis calls attention as "Un morceau remarquable pour le temps où il a été fait à cause de son caractère mélodique et rythmique." But in our opinion this piece cannot compare with "Honey-sucking Bees."

Then we come to many names worthy of much closer attention than can be given them here, where a passing glance must suffice. First, Thomas Weelkes, a very distinguished writer, only second to Wilbye ; Burney gives us a very interesting madrigal of his for treble voices (two sopranos and alto) which would be worthy of a reprint ; the words from Shakespeare's "Passionate Pilgrim," the music printed in 1597. It is in three divisions, though all are more or less of the same character. Dr. Burney takes the opportunity of Shakespearian words to run down somewhat forcibly those to which, as a rule, madrigals were written. After a careful perusal of Mr. Oliphant's book and others, we think the Doctor must have had a terribly high standard if such would not content him. In their style they appear to us as charming, taken as a whole, as could be wished for their object. They are *singing* words in the highest degree—words that ring musically before melody is given them. Instance upon instance could be given of their beauties, but we have only space to refer our readers to Mr. Bullen's two volumes of Elizabethan Lyrics, almost all gathered from the song-books of Wilbye, Weelkes, Dowland, Morley, and others.

We must pass over Ward, Benet, Bateson, Milton (the poet's father), all men of excellence in their writing, and whose madrigals deserve much more attention than the British public allow them, and conclude with a reference to Orlando Gibbons, who was the last of this noble army of madrigal writers, and who, with the one book only which he published in 1612, made a glorious conclusion to a splendid epoch of music for England. His "Silver Swan" is known wherever part music is pursued, and "Oh, that the learned Poets," enjoys almost equal celebrity.

Now, with all this beautiful national part music (and so much more that it is impossible to mention here) at our command—for, unlike much of the Church music, excellent collections of madrigals are published—why do not the Choral Societies of our villages and small towns take up and make a study of their country's musical foundation stones, instead of inadequately performing the "Messiah" with some thirty voices, as it has been our fate to hear no less than four or five times ? The expenses of pianist, piano, or orchestra are, one is always being told, some of the greatest hindrances to the pursuit of music in these small places, which, it must be remembered, in trying to form a widespread musical public, are much more numerous than the large ones. Now in such societies dedicated to the study of madrigals none

of this expense would be required, to say nothing of how much more benefit would be derived from the practice of unaccompanied music where the wrong notes cannot be covered, or the points hit out by the pianist. All that is required for madrigal singing is tune, time, and a great nicety in attention to points ; decision in the leads both of words and music (chorus singers are often unaware how much slovenly pronunciation hinders their effects) ; minute consideration of pianos and fortés, which occur often very suddenly, and are often the only variety of a madrigal. To make madrigal singing attractive, these points require much greater study than ordinary chorus singing ; but given such work, the madrigal could be properly performed by small societies, while the Hallelujah Chorus never can.

It may be interesting to give a short list of madrigals, many of them familiar, but chosen on account of the general attractiveness they possess, which could not fail to make them interesting studies for any choral body. Nos. 1 and 2, as has been already said, are in our opinion the finest madrigals on record. Gibbons has every right to the second place, after which follows a short general selection.

If only one or two readers are induced to take up and endeavour to forward the study of madrigals among our country Choral Societies, the object of this article will have been reached ; let us take a pride, and show it, in our national musical monuments, as we do in all others, for they represent sure and safe Foundation Stones for the Music of the Future.

1	{ Stay, Corydon Sweet Honey-sucking Bees	{ Wilbye.
2	{ The Silver Swan. Oh that the learned Poets	{ Gibbons.
	Come again, sweet Love	Dowland.
	In going to my lonesome bed	Edwardes.
	Lullaby	Byrd.
	I follow to the footing	Morley.
	As Vesta was from Latmos hill descending	Wheeler.
	Die not, fond man	Ward.
	Hark, heard ye not the Heavenly Harmony ?	Bateson.*
	All creatures now are merry	Benet.

* From "The Triumphs of Oriana."

A. M. WAKEFIELD.

(To be continued.)

The Protection of Dwelling Houses from Fire.

THE subject of constructing a dwelling-house with special reference to safety of life and property in the event of fire, attains a certain prominence at periodical intervals, and is then allowed to drop into oblivion or neglect. Such an occasion has now arisen, and, according to the experience of the past, the subject will probably occupy the attention of the public during a short portion of the present month, after which it will be laid aside until another catastrophe occurs. To those who, like the writer of this paper, are no alarmists, but think it a duty to give warnings occasionally, it is somewhat disheartening to find how quickly the most impressive lessons are forgotten, and how entirely hopeless it is to obtain the necessary attention except during the moments of excitement immediately following a disaster. The subject itself, however, is of permanent interest, and ought to be constantly before the minds of all who have to pay for the erection of buildings, or to inhabit them when erected.

When a building is inspected by an Insurance Company for the purpose of estimating its risks, all the points are carefully considered and a judgment formed on them; but how few private persons take the trouble of examining into the site of a house, the foundation, the area, height, shape, cubical capacity, external walls, roof, internal divisions, chimneys, staircases and stairs, floors, heating, lighting, &c., and yet all these are essential elements in calculating the safety or danger of a building. They are, moreover, so simple as to be within the understanding of any one, and do not necessarily involve the assistance or advice of skilled architects or engineers.

It is not every one who has an opportunity of selecting a site;

but those who have should value it highly, as indeed a bad site means in most cases a bad house. A dwelling perfect in itself, if built in a place inaccessible to vehicles, or in too crowded a locality, is dangerous in case of fire.

The foundations of a building are of paramount importance. It is true that imperfections in this way are less common in dwellings than in warehouses or places for the deposit of merchandise; but wherever there is "made ground," that is to say where the building is not constructed on the real soil, there are generally cracks in the walls, which are technically called "settlements." These are quite as easily discernible by the "lay" observer as by the most experienced architect or builder, and, wherever they are found, may be taken as a distinct indication of something being unsound.

To an intending purchaser or tenant it is hardly necessary to go into full detail about a "settlement." It is quite enough for such a person to observe that there is a grave defect, and it may be left to the seller or landlord to arrange with his architect or builder whether it is in the masonry or the foundation. All that the intending purchaser or tenant need know is that there is something which depreciates the value of the property. In short, a purchaser should know before entering into possession that a building with cracks in the walls is not safe in the event of a fire occurring.

It may somewhat astonish, and perhaps even amuse the general reader to be told that there is any connection between a cracked wall and a risk of fire; but this is one of the first and most important points to which the attention of a skilled fireman is directed in making an inspection. Where a building has been much cut about, where new work has been added to old, where heavy cuttings have been made within short distances, as for new roads or the foundations of other buildings, and occasionally where adjoining premises have had the walls underpinned or otherwise unduly strengthened, cracks will be found; and wherever there are cracks in the walls there is serious danger in the event of a fire happening.

The area, height and shape are all in their way important as resulting in the cubical capacity, and yet how seldom they are thought of by ordinary persons examining a house. The cubical capacity being fixed, the greater the area is, the less will be the height and consequently the risk. If the building is long and narrow, it can hardly take fire in all parts at the same

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time ; if it is square and solid, any fire occurring in it may instantly spread to every part ; if it is hollow and quadrangular, even with good walls or iron doors at the corners, a fire may spread across the windows of the internal angles. These points are of great importance, but the principal and paramount point of all is the cubical capacity, which, if excessive, may prevent the possibility of saving the building when once on fire.

In some cities it has been laid down that the cube of 60, or 216,000 cubic feet, is the largest cubical capacity which can be protected from fire ; and although improved appliances and increasing skill may in some way increase this calculation, those who have to examine houses and judge for themselves will do well to keep in view that the cubical capacity of a building has an important bearing on its safety or danger. This again is a point which is very seldom considered by any except insurance agents or firemen, and there are cases in which it is not considered by the former.

Then as to the walls ; how few there are who actually enquire as to the material or construction of these, although when they do enquire, they probably understand thoroughly as far as it is necessary for them to do so. For resisting the effects of fire, bricks laid in cement are very good ; after bricks, but a long way after, comes stone, but it must be well laid in cement or sound mortar ; otherwise it will give way when subjected to heat. A solid wall of stone, well built with cement or good mortar of lime and sand, will generally be found able to resist the effects of heat, gradually applied, sufficiently for all the purposes of a dwelling-house ; but a wall must not be assumed to be solid merely because it presents an appearance of being so.

There are many buildings which externally present the appearance of being built of solid blocks of stone, but which on examination can be discovered to be of rubble or broken bricks inside, with a veneer of stone slabs outside, so fastened as to deceive the eye. Such buildings are unable to resist the effects of heat more than a few minutes. Brick walls thoroughly "bonded" in themselves, and to others which meet them at an angle, very seldom give way in case of fire.

But the safest wall of all is probably one of concrete, composed of ashes, slag, or other materials which have been previously burned, and cannot be made to burn again. Of late years several kinds of concrete have been brought out, by means of which not only the external walls, but also those of corridors,

rooms, passages, and staircases, and the floors and stairs, can all be made in one solid block, from the foundation to the roof. Houses built in this way are certainly more safe than those of ordinary description, and are said to have many other advantages, and it appears somewhat strange that this mode of construction is not more generally adopted.

Where houses adjoin, as in streets, it is advisable to erect the separating or "party" walls to a height of at least three feet above the highest part of the roofs. All overhanging cornices, or other projections, should be supported in such a manner as to enable them to resist, for at least an hour, the effect of any heat to which they are liable to be subjected.

Roofs, generally, consist of a wooden frame, covered with tiles or slates, or, in some cases, planked over, and the planks covered with tin, zinc, or copper ; and where they are peaked, there is inside them an enclosed space above the ceiling of the top room, which is always an element of danger. Even flat roofs are not always free from this risk, as they are occasionally double, with a space of one or two feet between. Here, again, instead of the frames and slates, any of the good concretes might well be used to get rid of the present dust and gas traps, as well as to further bind the walls together.

It may be suggested that artistic considerations would in some cases prevent the use of flat roofs ; but if any dweller in cities will observe the utter and absolute hideousness of nine-tenths of the existing roofs, this difficulty will probably assume very small proportions. All roofs should be provided in convenient places with dormer windows, or other openings by which the inmates might get immediate access to the open air in the event of the stairs becoming impassable through smoke or heat.

The custom common in some countries, and unfortunately to some extent adopted here, of surmounting a structure of masonry with a wooden shed of several stories containing rooms, is one beset with serious dangers. Indeed it seems strange that the law permits the erection of a mansard roof, while it prohibits a similar structure on the ground level under its proper designation as a wooden shed covered with slates, tiles, or other materials to protect it from the weather. In a high building those who occupy the rooms of a mansard roof of two or three stories have a very small chance of escape in the event of fire.

The internal divisions of a house have an important bearing

on its safety. It is generally impossible that they can be complete so as to be able to prevent flame or smoke passing from one part of a building to another, as this would prevent access to the several parts, and so interfere with the purposes for which a house is built ; but, wherever they exist, on however small a scale, they are to that extent useful in helping to prevent fires spreading.

Those interested will therefore do well to observe that the safety of a house is generally in proportion to the number and extent of its internal divisions, and that every partition, door and screen may be reckoned as contributing to the result. In short it comes to this ; every object which can in any way resist the progress of flames is useful, and even those which slightly retard the flames, although after a time they yield and eventually even assist them, are better than nothing at all.

Long continuous roofs are dangerous, and should be divided by some kind of masonry ; even a 3-inch wall of brickwork would in many cases be sufficient for this purpose. Walls should not be built on girders or beams supported by columns, as this mode of construction cannot resist the effects of a high temperature.

Chimneys should be built of heat-proof material, should be strongly tied into the walls by wrought-iron bars, and should not in any part have a thickness of less than $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Whenever an opening or crack is visible between a chimney and a wall there is danger. Hearthstones should be laid in good mortar or cement, and should be at a distance of at least $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the joists or other supports. They should on no account rest on wood at any part. Many serious disasters have resulted from a neglect of this precaution. Chimneys may safely be built in stacks ; but no chimney should have a connection with any other. Each one should be complete in itself, and should be quite distinct and separate from every other from the lowest to the highest point. A chimney going only to the roof and ending at that point is dangerous ; blocked-up flues are also a source of danger.

The position and construction of staircases and stairs have a considerable importance with regard to the safety of a house, as almost every room opens on them, or on corridors or passages connected with them ; and, if they are so placed that a small quantity of smoke can close them at any one spot, they are decidedly dangerous. As a material for stairs, wrought iron is best, and this, if necessary for comfort or convenience, can be

covered with slabs of wood or stone ; after wrought iron comes cast iron, and after this any of the hard woods, as oak, elm, ash, mahogany, or teak, though this latter is seldom classed as hard ; after these woods comes slate, which, up to a very high temperature, stands fairly well ; and last of all comes stone, which for such a purpose is inadmissible, as it yields to an amount of heat which does not seriously affect ordinary respiration.

It is most unfortunate that in some places the law has called stone a fire-proof material, and has made its use compulsory for staircases and stairs ; but no law can alter physical facts, and it is a fact quite beyond any possibility of question that stone is not even heat-proof, much less fire-proof. Frightful losses have occurred through the use of stone for stairs, and it is earnestly to be hoped that wherever Building Acts exist, that is to say, wherever large communities live together in proximity, the use of this material for either staircases or stairs will be strictly prohibited. Every one knows of the danger ; but no legislator appears to have either the energy or the courage to remove this obvious defect in the existing law. Wherever a house has both wooden and stone stairs, the inmates should, in case of fire, invariably make for the wooden stairs as affording the only hope of escape. This is not a subject for controversy ; it is a matter which cannot be disputed by any one who has ever studied it, and it is thoroughly known to every fireman ; but in many places the unfortunate wording of the law still prevails, and, as long as it does, there is danger of loss of life.

A wooden stair, well plastered underneath, and without hollows or hidden gas-traps, will stand a great heat, and the same may be said of floors ; but most houses are full of these dangerous hollows in the stairs, the partitions, the wainscots, the roofs, &c., and, wherever hollows exist, there are receptacles for dust and gases, which, in the event of a fire occurring, are sources of very serious danger.

Floors should form no part of the structure proper of a building. They should simply carry the load which is to be placed on them, and should not in any way contribute to the support or bonding of the walls. Wherever they are so constructed or placed as to assist in the holding together of the wall, or wherever they do not fill the place allotted to them, without leaving any opening between them and the walls which carry them, they are unsafe.

Many heavy losses have been caused by floors being too weak,

and buckling in such a way as to become separated from the walls, and so allow smoke and flame to pass. Solid floors never yield in this way, and where concrete and cement are largely used, such accidents are almost unknown ; but wherever there are sham floors, such as those almost universally found in this country, consisting of half-inch boards on top, a half-inch coat of plaster on laths underneath, and a hollow space of 8 or 10 inches intervening, there is necessarily a very great risk in the event of a fire occurring. It would be well for any one interested in this subject to see an old house demolished, or to pierce one or two of his own ceilings or partitions, and learn for himself the true nature of some portions of his building, which, without investigation, present the appearance of great solidity and strength.

When a house is heated by means of hot water or steam, the pipes should not be allowed to come in contact with wood-work, and there should be a space of at least three inches between the pipe and the woodwork at every part ; and, where gas is largely used, care should be taken to distribute the lights so as to prevent a dangerous accumulation of heat at any spot. Wherever a house has the so-called sunlights, which consist of a cluster of gas jets in close proximity, special precautions should be taken for the discharge of the heat which is necessarily generated, and the chimneys or flues for this purpose, being liable in certain cases to become red-hot, should be double, with a space of 3 inches between, and should not be nearer to the woodwork than 6 inches at any part.

After detailing all these points of danger and safety, which are so simple as to be within the intelligence of any person of common-sense, however unacquainted with the ordinary customs of building or architecture, it must strike the reader as a somewhat curious fact that very nearly the same rules apply to a building with regard to sanitary matters. Half the dangers of dwelling-houses arise from the practice of deceit in building, so many parts of a house presenting an appearance wholly different from the reality. As already explained, floors which seem solid are really hollow, and contain filthy dust and foul gases ; partitions which seem to be of solid masonry are hollow, and consist of a thin washing of plaster over a few lathes tacked on to some concealed wooden supports, and the ceilings of upper rooms have above them a large space containing every kind of foul air and other noxious products of a building with imperfect and ill-regulated ventilation.

It would be interesting to watch the effect of a real inspection of these disgusting parts of a modern house on the mind of any person of refined habits observing them for the first time, and it is hardly too much to say that not one person in every thousand has ever taken the trouble or endured the inconvenience of a personal inspection of the kind.

Architects are not always or even frequently employed in building private houses ; builders seem neither to know or care very much beyond fulfilling the requirements of specifications ; public inspectors interfere very little except when their attention is specially directed to some obvious offence against the law, and in country places they have no power at all ; owners and occupiers assume that, if a house exists, it must be all right, and so people go on living in houses constructed in utter defiance of everything tending to comfort, health or safety.

The best remedy for this would be in every case to employ a skilled architect to examine and report on a building before occupying it as a dwelling ; but, if the general public continue to neglect this obvious precaution, the next best course would be to inspect the building on the principles here laid down, which are intended to be so simple and untechnical as to be within the reach of every intellect, however unused to such work, and then to form a judgment according to the dictates of common-sense.

It can hardly be doubted that there are thousands of persons occupying houses of a very high class, who would not for a moment tolerate the noxious conditions under which they live, if only they were made acquainted with the facts by personal observation ; and it may be plainly stated, that in almost all cases where noxious conditions prevail, there is a distinct and serious danger from fire, which can be without difficulty discovered and removed.

Every dwelling-house is necessarily provided with certain water-pipes, supplied from cisterns or reservoirs, and these pipes terminate in taps. Each tap should be fitted, on the outside, with a male screw, and some 20 or 30 feet of small hose should be hung close by for immediate use. Where the pressure of water in the pipes is insufficient, as occasionally happens in the upper levels of high houses, small hand-pumps might be provided for projecting the water to the necessary height. These little machines are very cheap and simple, and can be worked by women and children, almost as well as by men.

The occupier of a house should calculate the time at which

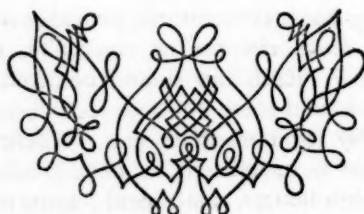
external aid may be expected to arrive, allowing five minutes after discovering a fire and before a messenger is sent away, one minute for each 150 yards to the place at which the message asking for help is delivered, the time of the engine or other appliance turning out, and the time occupied by it in travelling.

These times are considerably reduced in London and some other places by the establishing of call points, at which a messenger may ring a bell without running all the way to a Fire-Engine Station; but even with this advantage a considerable time occasionally elapses before an engine can possibly arrive. For instance, if a fire happens at a house distant 300 yards from a fire-alarm call-point, and one mile from a Fire-Engine Station, the following time will probably elapse before an engine can arrive:—

Before sending for help	5 minutes.
Running 300 yards.	2 "
The fire engine turning out	2 "
Travelling one mile	4 "
Total	13 minutes.

It is well that all concerned should thoroughly understand these simple explanations, and should make arrangements for their own protection during the time which must necessarily elapse between the discovery of a fire and the arrival of external aid.

EYRE M. SHAW.



In a Conning Tower.

HOW I TOOK H.M.S. 'MAJESTIC' INTO ACTION.



HAVE you ever stood within a Conning Tower? No; then you have not set foot in a spot where the spirit of man has borne the fiercest and direst stress to which the fell ingenuity of the modern world has learnt to subject it. You have not seen the place where the individual wages a twofold contest with the power of the tempest and the violence of the enemy, where, controlling with a touch and guiding with his will the gigantic forces of Nature, he stands alone in the presence of death, and asserts amidst the awful crash of the mental and physical battle, the splendid majesty of the spirit of man. For indeed there is nothing grander, more consoling to humanity, than the power of man to hold his own unshaken and unshakable in the face of unknown and incalculable dangers, upborne by the high inspiration of personal courage, by devotion to duty, or by the power of faith.

"Such a gift is vouchsafed to man"; but it is often bought at a great price, and often though life be spared to him who wins it, and though the human protagonist come out a victor in the contest, he survives with the scars of the terrible conflict burnt in for ever upon his inmost soul.

I have known a man, a giant in mind and body, emerge from the ordeal with hair blanched in an hour by the dread and strain of the conflict. Another I could tell you of, he who writes these lines, to whom the struggle between fear and duty, between terror and pride, brought the keenest suffering and the hardest trial which a man can bear.

Yes, I use the words fear and terror. I who have fought not without honour and success for my sovereign and my country, who bear on my breast the cross for valour, and whose name is not unknown among my countrymen and my comrades.

But let me come to the story I have to tell you. You have

never set foot inside a conning tower. Let me do the honours of my old ship, and let me ask you to go with me on board H.M.S. 'Majestic,' as she lies at anchor at Spithead. There she floats, a heavy mass upon the water, ugly enough no doubt to an artist's eye, but with a certain combination of trimness and strength very grateful to a sailor, and especially to a sailor who knows every inch of her within and without, and whose duty it has been to make use of her terrible powers in war.

It is but a little way from the gig alongside on to the deck, and the ship in a bit of a sea is all awash where we stand. But we can take many a green sea on board the 'Majestic' without being any the worse, and it takes a good deal to upset the equanimity of twelve thousand tons. Step through the door there. Stoop and raise your feet, for it is a strait gate. Now turn and look at the door you have passed. Talk of a banker's strong room, what banker in the world has a door like that; twelve inches of iron and steel, with a face that will turn all the "villainous centre-bits" that ever were forged? But the door must needs be strong, for the treasure it has to keep behind it is the honour of the flag, and those who knock will come with a rat tat equal to 50,000 tons on the square foot. Now climb again: here we have more space, and things look more like the old man-of-war of the story books. Six guns on a broadside and over a hundred men in the battery. Ah, when I think of that gun-deck as I saw it once! You mark the racer of this after gun; come forward now to No. 3 on the port side. All that is new work, a single shell ripped the battery side away for fifty feet from this point where you stand. Carriages, bulkheads, girders, beams, crumpled and torn like a tangle of bunch grass by an autumn gale.

This is the spot to which I wish to lead you. This is the conning tower of H.M.S. 'Majestic.' A chamber scarce six foot across, encumbered as you see with a score of appliances which diminish the scanty space which it affords. Touch the wall in front of you, a formidable partition is it not? Twelve inches of solid steel and iron, and carried down far into the framework of the ship. Note too above your head a solid roof of steel. This is the fighting position of the 'Majestic.' "The fighting position," you will say, "but how can an action be conducted from a spot from which no enemy is visible?" Stand here and bring your eye to the level of the armour-plating, and mark the narrow slit between the arched cupola above us, and the steel walls of the chamber; sweep your eye round, and the whole horizon will

come within your view. Look down, and in front of you is the sharp bow of the ship, and the two long white muzzles of the guns protruding many feet from the forward turret. Now look inside at the fittings of the conning tower, and read the inscriptions on the brass tablets which surround it. Over that group of speaking-tubes on your right you see the words, "Bow torpedo tube" and "above-water torpedo tube." On the left is the voice tube to the engine-room. That key completes the circuit which discharges the great guns.

Here in the centre is the steam steering-wheel, binnacle and compass. "All very trim and ship-shape," you will say, "and an immense convenience to the commanding officer to have all the arrangements of the ship brought under his hand."

Convenient, yes! but let your imagination come to the aid of your observation. Here lies the great ironclad, "a painted ship upon a painted ocean;" but see her as I have seen her; think, if you can, of what is meant by the accumulation of forces within this little space, and try to realize, as clearly as any man who has not passed through the ordeal can realize, the strain upon the human mind which is placed in absolute control of this mighty engine in the day of battle.

Every Englishman who is worth his salt knows something of the glorious naval annals of his country. The names of Rodney, Howe and Nelson are happily and rightly household words among us; we honour and revere those splendid masters of their art. Courage, skill, and a magnificent patriotism were theirs. All that their country demanded of them they did. But compare for a moment the position of any one of those great officers in the action, and that which the fearful ingenuity of modern science has imposed on their successors. On the one hand we had the Admiral standing on his quarterdeck, his star upon his breast, the central figure of his crew, animating them by his presence, and inspiring the group of officers who stand around him with the spirit which his great example in previous victories has set them. By his side stands the Master; it is his business to sail and navigate the ship. The first lieutenant, charged with the discipline of the crew and the fighting of the guns, will see that there is no slackness, no want of skill in working the long tiers of the broadside carronades; an easy task, for it does not require either his vigilance or the example of his subordinates to strengthen the fierce rivalry between each gun's crew. Already the order has been passed that it is the duty

of each ship to lay itself alongside of the enemy and to remain there till she has struck. The Master will lay the ship alongside, and the grimy gunners will continue to discharge their pieces at point-blank range until the wooden wall of the opposing ship is battered into a shapeless mass of smoking timber, and until the joyful news comes from the deck that the enemy's ensign has sunk from the peak in token of submission.

That was in the olden time. What are the conditions of modern war?

Here in this spot is concentrated the whole power of the tremendous machine which we call an ironclad ship.

Such power was never till the world began concentrated under the direction of man, and all that power, the judgment to direct it, the will to apply it, the knowledge to utilize it, is placed in the hands of one man, and one only.

What is this power?

Talk of Jove with his thunderbolts, of Nasmyth with his hammer! the fables of mythology and the facts of latter-day science! where has there ever been anything to compare to it? Here in the conning tower stands the captain of the ship, and beneath his feet lie hidden powers which the mind can scarcely grasp, but which one and all are made subservient to his will, and his will alone. Picture him as he stands at his post before the battle begins; all is quiet enough, there is scarcely a sound save the lapping of the water against the smooth white sides of the ironclad, and no outward sign of force save the ripple of the parted waters falling off on either side of the ram as it sheers through the water. But mark that white thread escaping from the steam-pipe astern, a fleecy vapour rising into the air and nothing more! But what does it mean? It means that far down below some thirty glowing furnaces are roaring under the blast of steam; that in the great cylindrical boilers the water is bubbling, surging, struggling, as the fierce burning gases pass through the flues; and that the imprisoned steam, tearing and thrusting at the tough sides of the boilers, is already raising the valves and blowing off at a pressure of 100 pounds. It means that the captain in his conning tower has but to press the button by his side, and in a moment the four great engines will be driving the twin screws through the water with the force of 12,000 horse power, and that the great ship with the dead weight of 12,000 tons will be rushing onwards at a speed of over twenty miles an hour.

In her turret and in her broadside batteries there is a deep hush of expectation : but there too, waiting to respond to the "flash of the will that can," lie forces of destruction which appal the imagination.

Far down below our feet in the chambers of the great guns lie the dark masses of the powder charges. A touch, a spark, and in a sheet of flame and with the crash of thunder the steel shot will rush from their muzzles, speeding on their way 2000 feet in a second, and dealing their blow with the impact of 60,000 foot-tonnes—5000 pounds weight of metal discharged by one touch of the captain's hand. Nor is this all ; another touch and another signal will liberate the little clips which detain the four Whitehead torpedoes in their tubes. A puff of powder, a click, as the machinery is started and the two screws are set off whirling, and with a straight silent plunge the long steel torpedoes will dive into the water, and at their appointed depth will speed on their way thirty miles an hour on their awful errand of destruction. Move that switch, and through the dark wall of the night a long straight beam will shoot forth with the radiance of 40,000 candles, turning the night into day.

A word spoken through that tube will let loose the hailstorm of steel and lead from the quick-firing and machine guns on the upper deck and in the tops. A discharge of shot and shell, not to be counted by tens or scores but by hundreds and thousands, a storm before which no living thing can stand, and under which all but the strongest defences will wither and melt away like a snow bank under an April shower.

And last and most terrible of all, there is one other force ready to the captain's hand : a force, the sum of all the others, and which, if rightly utilized, is as irresistible as the swelling of the ocean tide, or the hand of Death. By your side and under your hand are the spokes of the steam steering-wheel ; far forward under the swirling wave, which rises round the ship's cut-water, lies the ram, the most terrible, the most fatal of all the engines of maritime warfare. It is the task of the hand which turns that little wheel to guide and to direct the fearful impact of the ram.

Think what the power confided to one man's hand must be ; 12,000 tons of dead weight driven forward by the frantic energy of 12,000 horse-power, plunging and surging along through the yielding waves, at a speed of ten feet in every second, and with a momentum so huge, that the mathematical expression which

purports to represent it to the mind conveys no idea to an intelligence incapable of appreciating a conception so vast. To receive a blow from the ram is death, the irretrievable catastrophe of a ship's career. To deliver such a blow is certain victory. It is with the captain, and with the captain alone, as he stands here in the conning tower, that the responsibility of inflicting or encountering this awful fate lies.

Now you will understand what I mean when I say that never since the world began have such forces been placed in the hands of a single man, whose eye alone must see the opportunity, whose judgment alone must enable him to utilize it, and whose hand alone must give effect to all that his courage, his wisdom, and his duty prompt.

Perhaps you will ask what business have I, a naval officer, to allow such notions as these to run through my brain ; what business have I to talk about anxiety or responsibility ? The sailor's duty is plain ; he has got to find the enemy, to fight him, and to beat him. If he is either fearful or anxious, he is a man out of place. But unfortunately naval officers are after all made of much the same stuff as other people ; and there are certain circumstances in which their minds, however carefully tutored and prepared, are as much open to the strain of terror and anxiety as those of their comrades upon shore. Habit, personal courage, and a sense of duty may enable them to overcome these enemies, but they feel their assaults. Do not believe a man when he tells you that he does not know what fear is on going into an action ; above all, do not believe it of the captain of a modern ironclad when about to engage with an enemy of equal strength. True, he has nothing to do but to carry out the duties which years of practice have taught him how to perform ; but the heart never beat in a human frame whose pulsation was not quickened by the presence of danger. Sit at home and study the phenomena of electricity, codify the laws of the elements, and analyse the progress of the lightning with a Leyden jar and an electrometer, and you will doubtless learn to contemplate the prospect of a thunderstorm with a purely scientific interest. But stand alone in the night on the mountain side, amid the roar and flash of a tropical storm, and you must be either more or less than human if your imagination and your spirit are not moved and awed by the fierce play of Nature. And so it is with those who in the time of battle have to command a ship of war.

By a piece of good fortune which had not fallen to the lot of my colleagues, I had been two years in command of my ship when the late war came upon us. I knew her, as I have said, from stem to stern, from her armoured "top" to her iron keel, and by day and by night, in my waking hours and in my dreams, I had been going through every conceivable form of engagement which my experience or my imagination could suggest as likely to fall to the lot of the 'Majestic.' But sleeping or waking, by the light of experience or by the light of fancy, I ever saw one supreme moment when I should stand in this conning tower, and should be called upon to take into my hand for good or for ill, for success or failure, the mighty power of the ship, and to make myself responsible for the honour of the flag, the safety of the ship, and the lives of the crew.

And always one great fact remained present to my mind, that it was I, and I alone, who must do this thing; that on *my* judgment, on *my* skill, on *my* courage, must depend the issue of the day. I cannot describe to you how deeply this feeling of responsibility weighed upon my spirit, and how earnestly I prayed that when the time of trial came I might be found worthy of the post I held.

Well! at last the time did come. Everybody knows how strangely things were done at the outset of the war, and everybody remembers the merciful escapes from destruction, due not to forethought but to chance, which enabled the country to survive the blunders and the wanton carelessness of the Administration, and to live through the first shock of the war. Luckily we all know too how after chance had given us this happy and undeserved respite, the successes of our seamen, backed by the energy of our constructors, enabled us to regain and to assert that mastery of the sea which we had so nearly lost.

It was in the earliest days of this happier period, when the need for organization and system had begun to dawn upon the official mind, but before much had been done to give effect to the newly-awakened conviction, that the 'Majestic' was ordered to join the Mediterranean fleet.

We steamed out of Portsmouth Harbour alone. It was a mad thing, and everybody knew it.

It was an axiom which every one of the gentlemen at Whitehall had long ago committed himself to on paper, that no heavy ironclad should go to sea in time of war without an attendant squadron of cruisers, despatch vessels, and torpedo-

boats. But beggars must not be choosers ; there was urgent need for my ship in the Mediterranean, and all our cruisers, despatch vessels and torpedo-boats had too much to do in performing the immediate duties, which the stress of the situation and the want of any reasonable organization had forced upon them, to allow of their attending the 'Majestic' on her southward journey.

It is not easy to describe my feelings when our sailing orders arrived ; the mingled sensations which passed through my brain would be hard to analyse. At last the moment had come when the supreme ambition of my life was to be realized, and I was to command one of Her Majesty's ships in actual war. At the same time the total want of any experience to guide me in the enterprise which it was now my duty to undertake, and the feeling of uncertainty as to the correctness of the theories which my studies in peace time had led me to form, weighed upon my spirit to a painful degree. I must admit, however, that as we passed the Warner Light, and I telegraphed "full speed ahead," my feeling was one of extraordinary exhilaration. It is not easy to describe the mental atmosphere which seemed to pervade the ship ; but one characteristic struck me as being of good omen ; and that was the feeling of cheerfulness and good fellowship which seemed to animate all ranks of the ship's company.

One odd incident I remember as peculiar to myself. I had fully determined before I left port that I would dismantle my cabin of all the pretty knick-knacks and ornaments of which I was so proud, and which made it so charming and comfortable a retreat. When, however, the actual moment came for carrying my intention into effect, I felt an indescribable reluctance to give the necessary orders, and in the end I went to sea with scarcely a visible alteration having been effected in the arrangements of my cabin. The contrast between the pretty and homelike surroundings in which I studied once more my plan of action, and the terrible realities of the situation with which I might at any moment find myself face to face, dwells with a singular distinctness in my memory.

Our object being to reach Gibraltar unmolested and in good fighting trim, we naturally gave the shore a wide offing.

We had passed the Lizard Light some two hours when we came in contact with the first evidences that the ocean had become the scene of a bloody and fatal conflict. It was at this point that we fell in with H.M.S. 'Shannon' slowly making her

way homewards, and bearing plain marks of the strife in which she had been engaged. We exchanged signals with her, but she reported that she had not seen an enemy's ship for forty-eight hours. It was not till long afterwards that we learnt the particulars of the engagement from which she had just emerged. How, overtaken by a protected cruiser, she had lost no less than eighty men in the vain attempt to work her broadside guns ; how, preserved from destruction by her armoured belt, she had maintained herself until, by a lucky discharge of the new 9-inch B.L. gun, which the Admiralty, in a fit of unwonted prescience, had placed in the bows, she had succeeded in exploding a heavy shell in a vital part of the enemy's ship. How, safe from pursuit, but with her crew decimated and her armour in splinters, she had made her way back to Plymouth ; a testimony to the gallantry of her crew and to the error of her designers.

It was two o'clock on the following day that the look-out sighted a strange vessel hull down on the port bow. It was not long before the diminished distance between the two vessels revealed to us the three funnels and the raking masts of one of the enemy's fast cruisers. A good glass enabled us to detect two torpedo-boats steaming along under her quarter. I knew at once what our friend was about, and I longed for a swift companion whom I might despatch in pursuit ; but such good fortune was not to be. After making a careful inspection of us, the stranger went about, and steaming at full speed was soon beyond the horizon. To follow her was impossible, nor would it have been consistent with my instructions had I possessed the three extra knots which would have put me on an equality with her ; but I was pretty sure, and the event proved that I was right, that she had not paid us her visit of inspection for nothing.

During the whole of the following night we were steering west-south-west, and our object in keeping so far from the land had been fulfilled, for we had sighted nothing but a home-ward-bound British steamer from Valparaiso, which had made a clear run at an average rate of sixteen knots, and had not been molested by any enemy.

It was just after seven bells in the morning watch that the look-out man on the top signalled a vessel hull down on the port bow. It was a fairly bright morning, and the distance, as far as we could calculate, between ourselves and the vessel in question was about twelve miles.

Whoever the stranger might prove to be, there was little

necessity for any extra precaution on board the 'Majestic.' Throughout the night the water-tight doors had been closed ; all moveable bulkheads and unnecessary fittings had long ago been removed and stowed. Every man knew his station, and there was not the slightest occasion to hurry the men over their breakfast ; the only difficulty was to keep them from their fighting stations, or from any point from which a view of the stranger could be obtained. In a very few minutes it became apparent that, whether friend or foe, the new-comer was heading directly for us. Our orders were not to seek an engagement ; in this case it was evident that we should scarcely have an opportunity of refusing one, provided that we held our course, and that it was an enemy's ship that was in sight.

We were not long in doubt upon this head. In less than ten minutes not only the form but the colours of the stranger became clearly apparent, and the colours were those which it was our duty at any cost to lower.* The ship itself was as familiar to me as the flag which she bore. In these days, when photography and an elaborate professional literature have recorded the form and peculiarity of every important ship-of-war afloat, it would have been strange had I not recognized the formidable lines of the antagonist with which we were so soon to be in conflict. But my acquaintance with my adversary was a more intimate one than any which the study of books could have conferred. It was not three months since I had been on board of her. Nor was this all ; not only did I know the ship, but I knew who was in command of her. Many a time had I met Captain C—— when he represented his country as Naval Attaché in London. A more gallant officer, a more accomplished gentleman, never wore the uniform of the honourable service to which he belonged.

I confess that when I first realized who was my opponent, a sensation of a very peculiar kind passed through my brain. On the one hand, feeling as I did perfect confidence in my ship and in my crew, and rejoicing, as every man in my position would have done, at this opportunity of performing the highest duty of my profession, I was gratified that my opponent was a

* We learnt subsequently that the ironclad had been attended by the cruiser and torpedo-boats which we had seen on the previous day. Her auxiliaries had remained in port to coal, with orders to follow at speed in a few hours. Happily on leaving port they had been picked up by H.M. ships 'Blenheim' and 'Cossack,' which after a running fight of an hour and a half had sunk the torpedo-boats and captured the cruiser.

man whose defeat must add a special lustre to the efforts of my crew if they should be successful. On the other hand I felt, as I stood on the bridge as the two ships neared each other, that the conflict must inevitably be not merely between material appliances on either side, but between the brain and the heart of two men whose fortunes and whose reputations were equally at stake ; and I knew that the great ship that was bearing down upon us was guided by a master mind, which would be quick to seize an opportunity, ready to strike, and merciless to gain victory at any cost. It was to be a battle, no doubt, but it was also to be a duel, and a duel to the death.

In less than half an hour from first sighting the enemy, the distance between us was reduced to a little over two miles. The crew were at their quarters, the guns were loaded, the torpedoes were charged and ready for action, and the boilers were blowing off at their highest pressure ; for it had always been my fixed determination to fight an engagement at full speed. Up to this time I was standing close to the chart house on the upper bridge ; perhaps not the wisest place to have selected, but I was determined to avail myself as long as possible of the full power to sweep the horizon which my entry into my appointed station in the conning tower would so inevitably curtail. It was hard at such a moment to believe that the peaceful aspect before us must be changed before we were many minutes older into a hideous tempest of fire and blood. Many of us on both sides had served our respective countries for many years, but there was not one of us to whom the circumstances of the approaching battle were not absolutely new and beyond experience. The ship was making 105 revolutions and was running at a very high speed, over seventeen knots ; but the only sound was the crash of the engines, as familiar to us as the very pulsation of our own hearts and scarcely more noticed. By my side stood two of my officers, my gunnery and navigating officers, my signalman and one of his staff. The time for conversation had gone by ; we had said all that had to be said, but one more remark remained to be made.

"Mr. Maitland," I said to the staff-commander ; "I shall not require your services ; this will be a matter of tactics, and not of navigation ; we may be in need of officers before the day is out. I must ask you to leave the bridge ; I know you will regret it, but the interests of the service demand it."

The words were scarcely out of my mouth, and the officer had

hardly left the ladder, when a tongue of flame shot forth from the forward barbette of the enemy, and a thick eddying bank of white smoke rolled and tumbled over her bows, driven forward by the blast of the great gun. There was a pause, short enough indeed in our ordinary reckoning of time, but fully long enough for anxious and excited nerves to appreciate ere the hostile message reached its destination. Suddenly, some twenty yards ahead of the 'Majestic,' there rose into the air a vast column of water, and the eye, naturally following the direction of the shot, marked the great jets which sprang up far into the distance as the projectile ricochetted over the water.

The action had begun, and sooner than I had expected. The range was a long one—too long to my thinking—but evidently the enemy was not of the same opinion. The time had come when duty demanded that I should take my appointed station. I descended to the conning tower, followed by my subordinates. As I passed down the ladder, I saw the men duly posted at their stations in the tops and on the superstructure, in charge of the quick-firing guns. In the battery the larger quick-firing guns were loaded and ready. Nothing was wanted in that part of the preparations which my eye could reach, and I had the happy certainty that there was no detail in all the dark recesses of the ship which required vigilance and skill for its superintendence which had not been cared for by my officers.

A strange thrill came over me as I entered the conning tower. No one can analyze the sensations of such a moment ; but one feeling I recall with pleasure and gratitude, whether it were due to the happy inheritance of that English temperament and those English traditions which will reveal themselves in the time of danger, even to those who have been least conscious of enjoying the advantages they confer ; whether it were the overmastering interest of the situation itself, and the professional instinct which compelled me to regard the whole proceeding as a problem of absorbing interest, I cannot say. But of this I am certain, that from that moment the feeling of doubt and anxiety, which I must admit had been for many hours past one of the sensations of which my mind was most deeply conscious, passed away, and was replaced by a feeling of mental exaltation, and of keen and almost oppressive appreciation of the conditions of the fight. However, I had little time at the moment to consider my sensations. I at once requested Lieutenant Mannerling to communicate my orders with regard to laying the two heavy guns in the forward turret,

and a general instruction was passed to the guns in the battery to reserve their fire until special orders were received from me. By this time the ships were within 2000 yards of each other, the enemy about two points on our port bow. Again I saw the bright flash spring from her sides, and in a moment it was followed by a shock which shook the 'Majestic' from stem to stern. This time there was no error in the aim, and the steel shot had struck the ship on the thick plating abaft the turret. Subsequent examination showed a scar six inches deep; but the blow had been a slanting one, and the projectile flew off at an angle, and passed into the sea astern of us.

The time had come to give as good as we got. We were not near enough as yet to allow of the guns being successfully laid by my direction, and I passed the word down to bring both the turret guns to bear upon the enemy, and to fire as soon as she came on the sights. With a roar and with a crash which shook the tower in which I stood, the monster guns spoke their first word in war. Neither in the conning tower nor on the upper deck could the result of the shot be seen, but the signalman in the top gave us the welcome news that one shot at any rate had gone home. The guns' crews immediately commenced reloading, and looking through the slit of the tower I watched with intense anxiety the course of the enemy. There was a discharge from her decks, and in an instant there burst forth in front of my face, in all appearance on the very bow of the 'Majestic,' a sheet of flame, followed by a crack like the rending of the thundercloud. At the same moment, with a din such as I had never heard in such close proximity, the broken fragments of the bursting shell beat down upon deck, on turret, on conning tower. The destruction was instantaneous, and within a certain area it was complete. Stanchions, bollards, bulwarks—the deck itself—were ripped and torn like so much paper; but the solid face of the turret held its own with ease, and the muzzles of the guns, to my immense satisfaction, remained untouched.

A second shot was more disastrous, striking the battery on the port side about half-way down its length; it passed through the iron skin as though a gossamer, and bursting against the after bulkhead, spread ruin and death through the crowded space. Never had a single shot worked more havoc, never did men recover themselves under such a stress with such coolness and bravery as did the survivors in the battery of the 'Majestic.' I had deep reason to congratulate myself upon the order which I

had previously given, that the guns' crews on the starboard side should go below until their guns could actually be brought to bear. But for this order the carnage would have been terribly increased. Meanwhile my gunners were not idle, and the great guns had again tried the thickness of the enemy's sides, this time firing chilled shell, which proved by their detonation that they had found an obstacle.

It was now the crisis of the battle, for I saw the enemy rapidly changing course, and porting her helm make a circuit which would soon bring her broad on our port beam. Two courses were open to me: one was to hold on, to accept the encounter and run past at close quarters, exchanging fire on the beam; but a moment's consideration convinced me that to do so would be to favour the manœuvre which my adversary had commenced, and which I had anticipated from the outset. Once abaft my beam, his after-barbette guns would be as serviceable for attack as his forward guns had already proved themselves to be. I was, unluckily, not in the same plight; my single stern gun was not of a calibre to engage singly against such odds. At any cost I must keep my turret bearing on the foe. The alternative course therefore alone remained open to me.

I knew the turning circle of my ship to a yard, and in an instant I determined what to do. I would hold on.

The two ships were now in a blaze from stem to stern, the tops, the superstructure and the batteries in sheets of flame; my own fire, alas! diminished by the fatal shell which had played such havoc in my main battery.

Suddenly I saw that the time had come. The enemy was already heading in towards us, and in another moment his starboard guns would have opened upon us. Suddenly I gave the order "starboard, hard-a-starboard." The order was executed as soon as given, and the splendid ship, answering to the helm, came round with a swift, steady rush that made my heart leap for joy. We were within three hundred yards, and with our starboard bow presented to the enemy we rapidly approached to an even closer and more perilous range. The fire from the tops and superstructure had now slackened, for we had realized with sorrowful certainty the truth which modern warfare has revealed to us, that no exposed crew can live under the close fire of machine-guns. The loss on either side had been terrific for so short an engagement, and mere physical inability to load and work the guns had for a

time caused the fire to slacken. It was not my intention that the ship should complete the half circle, and suddenly porting the helm, I bore down diagonally on the starboard quarter of the enemy.

It was at this moment that both my antagonist and myself resorted to another of the great weapons of destruction that had been confided to us, but which had not as yet been called into play. I had given a general instruction to the officers in charge of the torpedo-tubes to exercise their discretion in discharging their weapons as soon as I informed them that a suitable stage in the operations had been reached. I now gave the required signal, and it was at this moment, as I was subsequently informed, that the starboard Whitehead was discharged. Almost at the same instant, one of the few observers left in the top, a midshipman who had found his way up there since the machine-gun fire had slackened, noted that a similar step had been taken by the enemy. I need hardly say that I was unable myself to observe either of the incidents which I have just related; the position of the conning tower, the thickness of the smoke, and, above all, my intense preoccupation prevented my appreciating the danger to which at that moment my ship was exposed. By a fortunate chance, however, an action of mine beyond all doubt averted the peril which I did not myself foresee. The discharge of the torpedoes on either side was evidently almost coincident with my sudden alteration of course.

The 'Majestic,' which a few moments before had been almost broad on the enemy's beam, had yielded to the pressure of the rudder and was already heading obliquely towards the other ship. Our own torpedo, running with an accuracy and speed which left nothing to be desired, passed close under the stern of our adversary. The chance which diverted our attack proved also our protection.

The midshipman marked the moment of the discharge of the enemy's torpedo, and his eye followed the line of bubbles as it advanced with furious speed in the direction of the 'Majestic.' Against the Whitehead torpedo once fairly launched against an unprotected ship there is no defence; the track of the terrible projectile is plainly visible to the eye, but no power can avert its course or parry the fatal blow. Seething and hissing, the torpedo came nearer; if the ship steadies on this course she must inevitably be struck; the hand which controls her is in the conning tower, and he who directs it is all unconscious of what depends upon the next

movement of the little wheel in front of him. But the ship is not yet round, the slight pressure on the spokes is maintained, the steam steering-engine passes it on with its full power to the rudder, and the ship steadily swings up to starboard. It is touch and go : the hundredth part of a point less and the striker will come full against the bow of the ironclad, and the great problem of the value of the Whitehead torpedo in war will have been illustrated by a practical example which perhaps few of the ship's company will live to study. But no ! Hidden for a second under the curling swell above the ram, the hissing bubbles reappear, hastening away on our port bow, and this time, at any rate, the 'Majestic' is saved.

But to return to my own immediate part in the engagement. The ship whose course had been in the shape of an S, was now completing her second half-circle, and the guns trained over the beam were still bearing upon the enemy as she steamed away from us. The starboard battery was remanned, and on both sides the firing was renewed with great vigour, though with a diminished accuracy which told that the loss of the leading men in the guns' crew and the fierce stress of the fight had produced their natural consequences. Suddenly, amidst the din of the firing, and easily distinguishable above the thunder of the guns, came the report of a fierce rapid explosion, followed by an instantaneous cessation of the enemy's fire. It was impossible to see what had taken place, but the fact remained beyond doubt, and I instantly determined to avail myself of it. It had been my intention to have kept my course at right angles to the enemy for a time, so that I might steam out of torpedo range, and again take up an end-on position. But this idea was instantly abandoned. Once more the helm was put hard-a-port, and once more the 'Majestic' circled round on the further side of her adversary. In a moment firing was renewed, and the enemy, to my surprise, came gradually round to port, as though about to cross my bows. It is a source of unfailing thankfulness to me to remember that at this crisis of the battle my mind was cool and collected, and my judgment perfectly clear. I turned to the lieutenant, and bade him transmit my orders through the ship. The orders were simple. "Lay both guns ahead, full speed and prepare to ram."

I stood with the steering-wheel in my hand watching every movement of the enemy ; for a freshening breeze now carried the smoke swiftly away. It was evident that something of

serious importance had taken place ; her speed was diminished, for the interval between the ships decreased much more rapidly than the lateral distance.

I was convinced that for a time at any rate my adversary had lost control over his ship. We were now separated by a distance of less than three hundred yards, and still the same apparent indecision marked the movement of the enemy, who was moving slowly with almost a full broadside presented to us, and somewhat on our starboard bow. Suddenly she appeared to gather full way, and her head began to come in slightly towards us. But it was too late ; the time had come. I moved my hand and the officer by my side flashed my will to the great turret guns. On both sides there was a roar and a crash which, had I not witnessed what befell a moment later, would have been the most terrific experience of my life. So much I can recollect, but the next few moments remain a blank on my memory. I was stunned, but the loss of consciousness was only for a few instants. I recovered to find myself leaning against what had an instant before been the wall of the conning tower, but which now was but a fragment of the wreck with which everything around me seemed overwhelmed.

The view, which had hitherto been obscured by the low roof of the tower, was now open, for not only had the roof gone, but a huge piece of the solid wall of the tower itself had been caught by the impact of the great steel shot, and now lay in bent fragments and huge slabs on the iron deck below. Of the three who, a moment before, had stood together in the tower, I was the only survivor. My signalman, crushed and mangled by the *débris* of the armour, lay in front of me. By my side my lieutenant had sunk down dead, his breast pierced by a single fragment of the flying metal. I raised my hand to my eyes to brush away the mist which I felt gathering upon them, and I found that my face was streaming with blood ; but while reason was left to me, it could only be concentrated on one thought and one object : that which lay before me.

Swept and shattered by the point-blank discharge of the terrible artillery to which she had been exposed, the 'Majestic' still held her course, and her course was that on which I had launched her. On either side the last bolt was sped, the gun had had its final word ; a greater power was now to give its decision, and from that decision there was no appeal.

Those who attach any value to the humdrum division of time

and distance by the ordinary standards of arithmetic and the clock-face, will doubtless be able to calculate for their own satisfaction that the period occupied in traversing two hundred and fifty yards at a speed of twenty miles an hour is to be reckoned in seconds only, and that the briefness of the allotted time gives no scope for the operations of the mind. Those who have ever stood in such a position as I stood in at that moment, will laugh at these dogmatic calculations, and will know as I know, that each second, and each portion of a second, is pregnant with its keen and separate consciousness.

The time, so heavily laden with the weight of the unknown result which it was about to produce, crept heavily along. But the end came at last. To the last moment, from the high deck and superstructure of the enemy, the fire from the machine-guns was maintained with a certain degree of energy. Our opponent lay between us and the southern sun, and I can at this moment remember the instant when the low bow of the 'Majestic' entered the shadow she cast upon the water. Then with a deep, grinding, terrible crash the ram did its work. We had struck the enemy about fifty feet from her bow, and the slight change in her direction made the blow a slanting one.

The 'Majestic' shivered from stem to stern, and I could actually see the ironwork on the bow ripping and splintering as it forced its way into the opposing side. But it was not there that the fatal wound had been given. Far underneath the water-line the protruding ram had struck a blow from which no human power could save the victim. For a moment all was still, save for the sound of the stretching and rending of the iron; then suddenly with a steady but certain heave, the great ship seemed to bow down towards us. I watched her for a moment; long enough to see the surface of the deck as it showed up with the heel of the ship, and then I knew no more. The strain was over, my work was done, and it was not till a month later that I opened my eyes in Haslar hospital and came back once more to the land of the living. Little remains for me to tell, but you will ask how the two ships fared in the encounter. Of the condition of my adversary I can tell you but little, for no subsequent examination revealed the work of our guns. Within a quarter of an hour after the ram of the 'Majestic' struck her, the last vestige of the splendid ship had sunk beneath the waves, her hull absolutely broken in two by the force of the collision. We had time to save some hundred and twenty of her crew, and

from them we learnt something of the effects of our cannonade. A projectile from our forward turret had struck one of a pair of barbette guns at four feet from the muzzle. The chase of the gun which was thus struck had been broken clean away, and the gun alongside of it had been so far dislodged from its slide that the loading gear had become unserviceable. The rapid discharges of the heavy quick-firing guns had been most destructive, and it was to a hundred-pound shot from one of these that the catastrophe, to which in all probability we owed our victory, was due. Falling full upon the side of the ship in the neighbourhood of the broadside torpedo discharge, the shot had carried a piece of the plate bodily inwards; and had come in contact with the striker of the Whitehead torpedo, just as it was about to leave the impulse tube. An explosion had instantly followed, the report of which we had heard, but of whose effects we had no conception at the time. Seventy pounds of gun-cotton exploding between decks had created havoc which might well appal the bravest. Nor was this all. The blast of the explosion had driven a heavy piece of metal against the connections of the steam steering-gear, and for a moment all control over the movements of the ship had been lost. Before the fatal moment the ship was again in hand; but it was too late, and the sequel has already been told.

One other fact we were able to discover, the last discharge from our turret guns, at three hundred yards, had gone home. One shot, piercing the armoured belt like paper, had cut a passage through the ship almost from stem to stern. The other, striking the conning tower, had in an instant destroyed the gallant captain of the ship, together with all those who stood round him.

On our side, with the exception of the final catastrophe, the results had been no less terrible. The central battery, torn as I have already pointed out by a heavy projectile, had been riddled through and through by smaller shell of every description. No less than ninety of our brave fellows had fallen in this part of the ship in a courageous attempt to keep up the fire of the broadside guns. In the tops and on the superstructure our losses were only limited by the number of men whom I had allowed to expose themselves in those dangerous positions. On the superstructure not one man in ten escaped without a casualty of some sort; but the thick walls of the turret had proved an adequate protection. With the exception of No. 1 of the starboard gun, who had been struck dead by a machine-gun

bullet in the very act of aligning the sights, not a single man of either gun's crew had been touched. But the outside of the turret showed the terrible nature of the attack to which it had been exposed. On the port side was a grazing dent ten inches in length, and scoring the round surface of the turret for a yard or more. A shell exploding on the glacis plate had broken away the iron in more than one place. While more remarkable than all the other injuries was the spot where a salvo of five simultaneous or successive blows from the six-inch guns had struck the steel-faced plating within the space of a square yard.

It was at this point that the armour had suffered most, and the accumulated force of the attack had shivered the metal, which, starred and cracked in every direction, had fallen down in heavy fragments eight inches thick upon the deck.

The last discharge of the heavy guns, which had well-nigh proved fatal to me, had struck the 'Majestic' in two places. The first shot, passing through the thin plating at the bow like paper, had imbedded itself deep in the forward bulkhead. The second shot, striking the crown of the conning tower, had carried away the iron roof and a large portion of the wall of the structure. Not a single shot was fired during the whole of the action from our after gun. The blow of the ram which had annihilated our enemy had not seriously damaged the 'Majestic.' The strain had shaken and dislocated the plating round the bow, but the consequent leakage was well kept in check by the collision bulkhead, and was mastered by the steam-pumps. But our loss in men, in protection, and in ammunition was too grave to allow of any alternative but a return into port, and the officer who succeeded me in command wisely decided upon adopting this course.

We returned to Portsmouth on the fifth day after leaving it. A single action, lasting less than thirty minutes, had decided the fate of two of the most powerful ships in the opposing navies.

As for myself, as I have told you, it was not till many days afterwards that I regained consciousness and learnt the facts which I have now recounted to you. During the weary period of my delirium, I acted over and over again every scene in the drama in which I had been recently engaged. Nor when the light of reason returned did the preoccupation pass from my mind, but from that time to this, and from now till the end of my life, the great crisis of my existence has ever been, and must ever be, the terrible time that I spent in the day of battle in the conning tower of H.M.S. 'Majestic.'

In the Wilds of North Devon.

THERE is still much wild country to be seen in England, and it is not always necessary to go very far afield for it. Between Albury and Ewhurst, in Surrey, or in some parts of the Sussex South Downs, the traveller may find moors as rugged and hills as picturesque, if not so high, as any in Scotland. Persons who love solitude can indulge it to their heart's content by plunging into the lonely recesses of the Kinderscout, in Derbyshire. Wales has some little wild country left, Scotland much more, Ireland most of all. If anybody questions the supremacy of Ireland in this respect, he should betake himself to Connemara, or to the coast of Donegal, and spend a few days in the neighbourhood of Slieve League, Malin More, and Glen Columbkille, and listen on a dark and stormy night to the music of "M'Swine's gun." The scenery of Ireland, if not her wrongs, will ever after haunt him like a dream.

But these stern and melancholy regions are ill-suited to the first fresh bloom of an English summer. At such a time it is good to turn the steps northward, though not too far north, and the happy mean may be found in North Devonshire, or at least I found it there in the last fortnight of May just past. A dash at the coast, and then a retreating movement inland, and again another seaward walk, will store the mind with many a recollection which will often work like a spell even amid the vast, and almost terrible, human wilderness of London. Ilfracombe is fast growing into a large town, but its neighbourhood provides an almost endless choice of delightful rambles. The country between Ilfracombe and Braunton Barrows, including the coastline, is almost inexhaustible in the variety of its charms. The deep combes between Morthoe and Lee are covered with primroses, gorse, blue-bells, and violets—fairy valleys, brilliant with blue and gold, flashing in the sun brighter than any jewels ever

shaped by man. Primroses grow in thick clusters down to the very edge of the water. From one combe to another the traveller will pass, well-nigh dazzled by all this splendour, and more than ever convinced that the world has nothing much more beautiful to show than a perfect English landscape on a perfect English day. But even such a day cannot entirely dispel the gloom which hangs over Morte Point, the point of death, where so many brave men have gone down suddenly to their doom. There stand the dreaded rocks, like a row of shark's teeth, grim and implacable as fate, waiting for their next victims. The solitude of all this coast is gradually being invaded ; at Woolacombe Bay the advanced guard of the innumerable host of lodging-house keepers has established itself in a firm position ; at Morthoe the builder is pursuing his ravages. Villas are run up in a night and christened with some crack-brained name early the next morning. It is well to get away from all this, to spots where the eye does not rest quite so frequently on the too familiar story of "lodgings to let."

Beyond Ilfracombe and Watermouth—another land of wild flowers—Combe Martin spins itself out in a feeble manner over a mile or so of ground, and a road, not used for ordinary traffic, winds to the brow of the hill known as the "Hangman," one of the landmarks of North Devon. From Dunkery Beacon, or from the plain in the midst of Exmoor, and from many another distant point, the Hangman is to be descried. Trentishoe has a little church worthy of more than a passing glance, and the stranger will also incidently observe that the roads are becoming very steep, and that a good deal of up-hill and down-hill work has to be done if the coast-line is to be properly explored. At the head of a lovely ravine leading to the sea stands a hostelry which presents so inviting an appearance that it is difficult to tear oneself away from it. It is all alone in the midst of charming woods and valleys, and the visitor, if weary, may prudently take his rest at "Hunter's Inn," while a comely damsel brings forth a midday repast. The greasy waiter has not yet made his appearance in some of these Devonshire inns. The daughter of the host is not above waiting upon the guests, and sometimes she is enough in herself to make the fortune of the house. Some few miles farther on our road there is a quaint old inn, with gabled windows and a thatched roof, where a maiden presides who is almost pleasanter to look upon than the hills and moors of her native county. An old Devonshire rhyme lays down a very sound principle :—

"He that will not merry be,
With a pretty girl by the fire,
I wish he was a top of Dartmoor
A-stugged in the mire."

A man who is capable of hesitating for a moment between these alternatives had better not go near the thatched cottage, which I regret to say has already been invaded by some considerable personages in the State, whose attractions are apt to cause the humbler tourist to be overlooked.

The path from Hunter's Inn towards the cliffs runs between hills shining with golden furze, onward to Heddon's mouth, a weird nook in ocean's domain. Perhaps tourists find their way thither later in the season; in May, nature had it all to herself. At the extreme point of the path a grand view bursts upon us; exquisite hills, a glorious expanse of sea, a romantic coast, and Lundy Island looming up in the distance like a huge whale. A green mossy path winds round the cliff towards Lynton, sometimes passing so close to precipitous descents that it is a little trying here and there to unaccustomed' heads. A small rivulet has made for itself a cool nest among the rocks, and is sometimes described in guide-books as "the cataract." Then come Wooda Bay, and hill-sides covered with beautiful trees, and a well-known park and valley, and at last Lynton.

I remember it a peaceful village, remote from railroads, hard to get at, harder still to leave. It is still nearly a score of miles from a railroad, but the hand of man is doing its usual fatal work on one of the loveliest spots our country had to boast of. Flaring notices everywhere proclaim the fact that building sites are procurable through the usual channels; this estate and the other has been "laid out"; the lady reduced in circumstances, and with spare rooms on her hands, watches for you from behind the window-blinds; red cards are stuck in windows denoting that anything and everything is to be sold or let. A long and grievous gash has been torn in the side of the beautiful hill opposite Lynmouth—a gash which must leave behind it a broad deep scar never to be healed.

"Who has done this?" I sorrowfully asked the waiter at the hotel.

"'Tit-Bits,' sir."

"Who?" said I, thinking the waiter was out of his mind.

"'Tit-Bits,'" the man repeated.

"Well, then," said I, "what has 'Tit-Bits' done it for?"

"To make a lift, sir. Some people complain of the hill, and so this lift will shoot 'em up and down it, like it does at Scarborough. They say it will be a very good spec. You see, sir, he came along here and bought the land ; and I have heard say that 'Rare Bits' is coming too, and means to make a railroad."

"Well, but between 'Rare Bits' and 'Tit-Bits' you will by-and-by have no Lynton left."

"That's what I hear many say, sir."

Perhaps it might have been almost as good a "spec" to leave Lynton alone. The hotel itself, like all but one of the other hotels, has been changed from a long, low, old-fashioned building, into a huge, staring structure, assailing the eye at every turn. All has been made "modern," within and without. Doubtless it was an inevitable necessity of the age. We have had nearly enough of the fine old English hotel, with its fine old English feather-bed, from which you are either slipping and sliding to the ground all night, or getting half-smothered in its mouldy-smelling interior ; enough also of the stuffy passages, the bedrooms looking out on the tiles, the creaking floors, the frowsy carpets and curtains, the antiquated chambermaid, and the fine old English bill—a truly solid and substantial piece of furniture—in the morning. The new hotels are at least clean, and they smell moderately sweet.

Lynton may be disfigured, but it will take a long time to spoil it utterly. It has such charms as cannot easily be effaced. It is easy for the visitor to indulge himself in any kind of walk which may suit his fancy, through deep woods, or over breezy moors, or below in secluded valleys, beyond the beaten track of ordinary excursionists. Few parts of the coast are more striking than the Foreland and its neighbours, where Exmoor comes rolling over to the sea. Shades of rich red and green cover the face of the cliffs, and the colours are peculiarly soft and beautiful when seen under the evening sun, or from the summit of the hills close to the Foreland. A cliff path, much interrupted by combes or by rocks, runs round to Glenthorne, upwards of six miles or it may be struck after a long walk over the moors from Countisbury, by following a cart-track, and making towards an old wall near the rugged face of the Foreland. The day is not long enough on Exmoor. In every direction there is some irresistible attraction to lead one further on. The very turnpike road runs through some of the

wildest country in this part of England. Wander two or three miles away from it and you come at long intervals upon remote farm-houses, hidden away in dells, the gable-ends just visible from a sheep track ; or perhaps upon a valley, which you follow on, caring nothing whither it may lead, or how the time is going. The pedestrian may generally depend upon having these valleys entirely to himself, with the single exception of one which will for ever be associated with that masterpiece of romance, *Lorna Doone*. Everybody drives or walks to the Doone valley. Wherever you go in the towns, the shopkeeper is offended if you do not buy *Lorna Doone*. I have read that delightful work three times, and the third time with greater pleasure than either of the other two ; but I am not open to buy a copy of it in every part of North Devon. People go to Oare Church and search the register for the entry of Lorna's marriage, and are very much surprised when they do not find it. The birds went up to the cherries in Apelles' picture, and tried to peck at them. Great writers have the same faculty of making us believe in the reality of the creations they have placed before us. It is to be hoped, however, that few people wait till they go into Devonshire before reading *Lorna Doone*, or that other noble, if somewhat less fascinating, piece of work, *Westward Ho*.

The grey old tower of Countisbury Church will guide the traveller back, always supposing that he happens to be in a place where he can see it ; for although the church is nearly at the top of a hill, the moor comes surging down upon it and well-nigh swallows it up. Hard by the church I met an old man ascending the hill, with a cart behind him laden with a thin kind of turf. He was walking along with his eyes fixed upon the ground, as so many people do, seeing nothing but the road, and paying no regard to what is going on around them. A small pony was breasting the hill valiantly with the cart, planting his sturdy forefeet on the ground in a very determined manner, giving a mighty heave now and then, and compelling his load to follow him with the spirit of one who disdains to be beaten. I stood admiring this brave little fellow until he reached the spot where I stood, which happened to be his destination.

The old man and his pony evidently appreciated each other thoroughly. Either the pony was always turning about to look after the man, or the man was giving a furtive glance towards

the pony. It was difficult to judge which of the two had picked up the most shrewdness and knowledge of the world in his progress through life.

I could not tell the pony what I thought of the man, and therefore I was driven to exchange a few words with what, for aught I know, may have been the inferior animal. I thought at first that it was peat which filled the cart, and said so, but my friend corrected me.

"It is surface stuff," said he, "from the moor—rather poor, for we very soon get to stone about here. We store it up for winter, and I can tell you we need all the fire we can afford, for cold is no word for the weather when once the snow sets in." He then told me something about turbary, and "limited" and "unlimited rights," displaying, I confess, much greater knowledge of the subject than I possessed, and proving himself well-versed in the things which concerned him.

"What a splendid pony you have there," said I, trying to hit him in a soft place.

"Ay, you may say that," said the old man, with a sparkle in his eyes. "He is real Exmoor, one of the old sort. You can do anything with him. They mix 'em up now so that you don't know what you have got hold of, but this one is the genuine breed. He would follow me anywhere. When he hears my whistle he will come from the moor any time, unless he has got with some of his brothers. Then he won't."

Here the old man took out his whistle, and blew a shrill blast upon it. The pony, seeing his master standing a few yards off, cast upon him, as it seemed to me, a look of withering contempt, and took not the slightest notice. Again the man blew the whistle, and again the pony looked at him out of the corner of his eye, with an expression which seemed to say, "Why are you standing there making an ass of yourself with that whistle? At your time of life, you ought to give up these practical jokes. Here am I, and here is your confounded turf—what more do you want?" The old man, I thought, felt this rebuke, for he put back the whistle in a sheep-faced way, and stroked the pony by way of offering an apology.

"Yes, sir," he went on, as if desirous of further mollifying the pony, "he is a wonderful animal, and knows all about everything. I'm a poor man, but I wouldn't take £20 for him. See him now back up to the door of that there shed when I tell him—he'll do it of himself, just like a man." The old fellow gave

the word of command, and the pony turned, backed, reached the door of the shed, backed a little further and came to a dead stop, within half an inch of the place where the turf had to be unloaded.

"What do you think of that?" asked the old man, giving me a friendly dig in the ribs with his forefinger.

"I think," said I, "that you are the luckiest man in Devonshire." And I patted the pony on the head; but he made a sudden grab at my arm which somewhat shook my confidence in his sagacity.

"Round at the 'Blue Ball,' sir, you'll get a plain lunch," and a plain lunch is the best kind of lunch any day.

The parlour of the inn was very cold, although the air outside was hot. These rooms are always kept shut up, in winter or in summer, and the atmosphere is that of a vault. They gave me a plentiful supply of eggs, white and creamy to look upon, and milk, and bread-and-cheese, and everything I required, all for one shilling. Evidently there is a little difference between the tariff of the "Blue Ball" and that of the "Company" hotels, where they make you pay 1s. 6d. or 2s. for a cup of tea, and almost enter a special charge against you for looking at the clock.

The view of Exmoor from the hills beyond Countisbury will certainly inspire the least imaginative of visitors with a desire to make his way a little further into the interior of the last remaining haunt of the red deer. The road which can be tracked for miles, winding and twisting towards Porlock and Minehead, is not to be despised, but it is worth while to strike from it at the first finger-post on the right, down towards Oare, where the wildness of Exmoor makes itself more distinctly felt than it can do on a coach-road. There are large tracts of land under cultivation, but the moor is extensive, and as a rule its solitude seems to be almost wholly undisturbed. Only once did I meet anybody in my rambles, and that was near the road—an oldish-looking young man, evidently poor, and apparently a good deal overworked. He told me that he had several brothers and sisters younger than himself to support, and that he found it almost more than he could manage, his own health not being good. His mother used to do a great deal towards keeping the house together, but she died last winter. He spoke so often of his "poor mother," and with such regret, that I could not help asking him if his father was dead also.

"No, sir," said he in a hesitating tone, "but—"

"I see. What he earns does not always come home."

"No, indeed," said the young man, with a faded sort of smile, "and that's the way with a good many. I've seen a lot of it. The poor woman slaves at home, but she can't do everything. The father goes to the public-house with the money on Saturday night, and makes away with it. Then there is no dinner on Sunday for the children. That's the way of it. It's the poor children that suffer."

So it is, that wherever one goes, the fell demon of drink crosses the path. In no other country in the world are men so mad as to give all the profits of their week's hard work to the gin-shop keeper. Some people say that the manliness is going out of the English nation, and they are able to point to most unpleasant signs in support of their theory. If it should come to pass that we are ever brought to shame, the curse of drunkenness, which has so long cast its blighting influence upon our land, will be the chief cause.

Everybody told me that the wildest part of Exmoor is that which lies between Lynton and Simonsbath, and to that quarter, therefore, I made my way one morning, when the sun was shining brightly, and the dew was still upon the grass. Through the valley of Waters'-meet, where a whole choir of birds were singing their very best, and the blackbird was trying to silence the cuckoo—past a few cottages at the top of a hill, along a very devious road, ever mounting higher and higher, past more woods and fields, through a gate, and out upon the veritable moor. Here all traces of "improvements" happily disappear. The heath remains undisturbed, except where here and there a patch has been cut for fuel. Turf stacks are piled up at long intervals, and turf cutters are occasionally met with—strong, tall, hardy-looking men, always ready to give the stranger information. Throughout all this part of the country the people retain the graces which generally disappear with what we call civilization—they are still a simple, courteous, unaffected folk, not thinking it beneath them to give a civil salute to the passer-by. Whether they will be of the same mind when railroads and 'Tit-Bits' have had everything their own way is not so certain. Some miles of glorious walk or drive over moor will be enjoyed by the visitor, ere again he sees patches of ground under cultivation, as he nears the curious little settlement of Simonsbath, which was intended to have been the centre of a great population of farmers. But for once Nature, with

her winds, and mists, and snows, has been too much for her enemy Man, and the larger part of Exmoor obstinately refuses to be reclaimed.

The odd-looking ruin of the grand house which was designed for the projector of these great schemes stands behind the dwelling of the present owner of Exmoor. Much good has been done by the Knight family for the people around them, even though the moor proved to be anything but a gold mine. The farmers are said to be fairly prosperous, but yet I was told that the land was slipping back into a wild state. The village of Simonsbath consists of a few cottages only and a little church. The Post Office backs itself into the road, just opposite the inn—the only place of refreshment to be found for some miles in any direction. Great, therefore, is the disappointment of many visitors when they arrive there and find that no strong drink is to be obtained, unless they like to order a bottle of wine. I asked some one outside why this was so? "Because the people used to get drunk, and Mr. Knight had the beer and spirit license stopped. Sometimes men used to be lying about the roads, drunk." The remedy works well in a small place like this, where the population is scanty, and where it cannot be worth while for any one to pander to the love of drink.

The visitors' book at the inn contained innumerable doleful laments concerning the absence of beer. I never before realized how precious, not to say indispensable, is beer to the ordinary Englishman. Deprive him of it, and the universe becomes a blank. The few visitors who found anything worth seeing in Exmoor after they discovered that beer was cut off, appear to have set to work writing descriptions of the scenery in excruciating verse. Why does an Englishman away from home so frequently take it into his head that he is a poet? It is of a piece with the other eccentricities which distinguish him on his travels—with his loud check suit, and his still louder manner, his airs of superiority, and his hat which will not come off his head even when he enters a church. To see a middle-aged man sitting down at an hotel table, chewing the end of a pen, cudgelling his brains for rhymes, and fancying himself another Byron, is far more comic than anything the theatres have to show. I could find nothing in the visitors' book which seemed to me finer than some of the descriptive stanzas in *Childe Harold*, and I fear that a generation which does not even read *Childe Harold* will scarcely go to Simonsbath to look for a poet.

One of the villagers told me that the roads in winter hereabouts are sometimes blocked up with snow, and that Simonsbath was then "rather dull." He cannot be suspected of using exaggerated language. I understood from the man that he was born in this out-of-the-way place, and had never been far beyond it. I asked him if he had never felt inclined to try his luck elsewhere.

"No," said he, "what's the good? You must work wherever you go. I don't know of a place where you can get money without working for it, do you?"

I was obliged to confess that I did not, unless you have good family or official "influence" at your back, and then there is no telling what may be done. The village philosopher told me further that Barnstaple tradesmen brought over all the groceries and other supplies that were wanted at Simonsbath. Evidently there is some of the old spirit of enterprise left in the good town of Barnstaple.

Magnificent walks abound hereabouts—down the river Barle towards Withypool, a rough path, but leading the visitor through a fascinating region of rocks and wild hills. Then there is said to be a scrambling sort of track to Dulverton, which, alas! I had not time to try. I went in another direction towards Span Head, on the road to South Molton, and saw quite enough to make it almost heart-breaking to think of turning back. There was one thing which I looked everywhere for and could not find, and that was a trace of those true wanderers on the face of the earth, the gipsies—not the half-breeds who infest the commons near London, but the veritable old stock, the gipsy who was proud of his descent from kings and queens of his tribe, and who would have looked upon the mongrels of this degenerate age with as much contempt as a Spanish grandee would feel for the last new English baronet. It is said that the gipsy's morals were bad, and that his way of life was not free from reproach. It may be so; I have known many persons, of far greater social pretensions than gipsies, of whom the same things could be said, and many more added to them. Yet the world looks kindly upon them.

The last time I met with the genuine gipsy, as distinguished from the cross between the London costermonger and the professional tramp, I had been on a pious pilgrimage to the home of one who loved the race well—the home of George Borrow, whose soul was penetrated through and through with

the wondrous romance of English country life. Unless the power to appreciate that romance comes in youth, it never comes at all, and that is why so few people possess it. The majority go through this varied and enchanting English country of ours, immersed in their own affairs, or impatiently clamouring for beer, and all the deep and mysterious influences of the everlasting sky, and the green fields beneath, and the murmuring trees are utterly lost upon them. To be dead to these sights and sounds is a hard lot ; but those who are afflicted with it seldom seem to be conscious of their doom. For the most part, they are rich men, the poor being almost always lovers of nature. Providence has conferred upon them at least that one boon. Look at their little strips of garden in the suburbs, and their heroic attempts to grow flowers in towns. The rich have many things in this world, but they have not everything, nor does it appear to be appointed that they shall have everything in the next. Perhaps the poor may sometimes derive a melancholy kind of consolation from the remembrance that it is for them all the best of the bright promises for the future are reserved.

It was a long time after George Borrow's death that I went to his home by Oulton Broad, and not without difficulty did I find the house, for no one whom I met had ever heard of his name. At last I came upon an old deserted garden, almost shut in by trees, and with long rushes growing by the water's edge. Weeds covered the walks, and the house—a mere cottage—had a singularly forlorn look. While I was thinking of the strange genius whose eyes once rested upon this scene, a little old man came out of an orchard or wood, bent in form, with long white hair, and with a scythe in his hand—if he had carried an hour-glass in the other, I should have taken him for Father Time himself. I asked him about George Borrow, but he said he "never knowed him." After a time I went out into the roads again, and there by a green belt of grass was a gipsy tent, and Borrow himself would have hailed it with delight.

An old woman came forward, tall and erect, and surveyed me quietly. Hoops had been bent over into the ground, and covered with old matting. This was the gipsy's home. The old woman perhaps thought I was the proprietor of the little field in which her tent had been pitched, whereas I never in my life owned enough land to fill a flower-pot.

"We are only stopping for the night," said she, by way of apology.

"Stop for a year and welcome, so far as I am concerned," I replied, and therewith she asked me into her house.

Brass vessels of various kinds were standing about, and a big copper kettle was near the door. The old woman also showed me a splendid tub, made of mahogany and bound with brass—a fine old gipsy heirloom.

"My name is Lee," she said, and to prove it she took me outside, and showed me a neat cart with "H. Lee, Cambridge" on the side.

"Where are your children?" I asked.

"Here comes one," said she; and there suddenly appeared at the door of the tent a very pretty black-haired girl of about seventeen or eighteen—just such a girl as Isobel Berners must have been when the Romany Rye first met her on the road, and fought with the Flaming Tinman.

"Come in," said the young lady, and I, nothing loth, accepted her invitation, the mother following us. They spread a bit of carpet on the ground in true Oriental fashion, and I sat down and had a talk with them about "dukkerin pen," which signifies the art of telling fortunes, and about the old woman's sons who were engaged on their business elsewhere. The daughter went on shelling peas, and getting supper ready for the brothers, who were to return at nightfall. These were well-to-do gipsies; but all the same the old woman offered to do a little bit of "dukkerin" on my behalf, and volunteered the information that love would never kill me. Surely that was fully worth the trifling present I gave in exchange for it.

But the gipsies, as I have said, are dying out, and a race of low tramps scour the country in place of them. Fortunately, they cannot make their way to Exmoor, for they do not like to trust themselves far beyond the beaten track. Much is changing in England, and much more will change as time goes on; but the peaceful valleys, the green hills, the homely fields, the bright streams running amid shady woods—these yet remain, and miserable indeed must be the man whose heart does not leap within him at the sight of them.

L. J. JENNINGS.

The London and Brighton Railway.

IF on a given day all the season-ticket holders in Great Britain were confined to their houses for a space of four-and-twenty hours, the fact would make little difference to the appearance of the "Dutchman," or the "Flying Scotchman," or the "Wild Irishman," or the other great expresses that we have hitherto been concerned with. But the best trains of the Brighton Company would be little better than strings of empty coaches. Let any one travel by, for example, the 8·45 A.M. from Brighton, or the return train at 5 P.M. from London Bridge, and notice the look of pleased surprise with which the ticket collectors accept the tender of an ordinary ticket, and he will realize the dimensions to which the Brighton season-ticket traffic has already grown. We should probably be well within the mark in saying that even now season-ticket holders constitute more than half of the passengers in the superior classes. And there is every prospect that year by year the proportion will continue to increase as it has done uninterruptedly now for many years past. For, recognizing as it does that the season-ticket revenue is the backbone of the system, the Brighton Company does everything in its power to encourage this class of traffic. On no other line are equal facilities afforded. A man may travel in a first-class carriage all over the line, from Sunday morning till Saturday night, for the modest sum of £3, and for £60 he may prolong his occupation for a whole twelvemonth. He may journey every day of his life between London and Brighton for £30 per annum, or, allowing him a holiday on Sunday, 2s. per diem; in other words, two-thirds of what the humble cheap trippers pay for their day's outing in "covered cars."

No company, not even the North-Western itself, turns out smarter-looking trains than the Brighton main line expresses, or even than many of the suburban trains. Alone of the southern

companies, the Brighton has learnt the lesson, that the great English lines laid to heart years ago, though foreign companies have not yet begun to master it, that to avoid unnecessary wind-pressure a train must be uniform in shape ; that to look well a train must be uniform in colour ; and that a distinctive colour is a perpetual and gratuitous advertisement. No one who meets the familiar chocolate and white of the North-Western at Inverness or Tenby, or the conspicuous deep red of the Midland at Bournemouth or Hull, can fail to be reminded of the existence and the ubiquity of those companies. But a South-Western carriage often seems in doubt as to what line it really belongs to, and though that Company has recently adopted a distinctive brand of its own, it is as yet very far from having been applied to the whole of the stock. A Brighton train and a Brighton engine proclaims its paternity a hundred yards away. Nor, though the carriages might perhaps be built a little stronger and heavier, and the third class a little roomier, with advantage to the comfort of the passengers if not to the locomotive expenses of the Company, need the Brighton shops be ashamed of the work that bears their colours.

The best and newest of the stock is reserved for the season-ticket trains, the 8.45 A.M. from Brighton, the 8.40 A.M. and 9.55 A.M. from Eastbourne, and their corresponding down trains. The Brighton train deserves a special word of notice. Luncheon-cars and dining-cars have now, thanks to the Midland and the Great Northern, become everyday affairs ; but the Brighton alone can boast a breakfast-car, in which the preponderance of the business sex is shown by the fact that smoking is permitted throughout. And the same liberty is allowed, even when the breakfast-car of the morning becomes an afternoon tea-car on the return journey. For those too who care for a luxury that is Continental rather than English, there are *coupés*, for which, however, the Continental *surtaxe* of 10 per cent. is not demanded. The train is fitted with the electric light, each compartment having two 16-candle lamps, whose brilliancy, if it errs at all, certainly errs on the side of excess rather than deficiency. But we must not dismiss the electric lighting in a single sentence, as the Brighton Company have not only been the pioneers in this immense improvement, but have gone further and faster than any other company. For years past their Pullman cars have been lighted by electricity from accumulators which originally were taken out, charged, and replaced, and at a later period

were charged every night *in situ* from a small dynamo at Victoria, driven by a special gas-engine. Simultaneously, however, experiments have been carried on with dynamos on the train itself, and driven by the axle in the guard's van. In its latest shape the machinery is of the most compact nature possible, and is entirely contained—dynamo, accumulators and all—in a cupboard which only occupies two feet of the van's length. The dynamo runs indifferently both ways, having a set of brushes on either side with a special magnet, which brings the alternate set into action as often as the direction of the train is reversed. The Company have already fitted seventeen trains in this manner, and are so well satisfied with the result, that within the last few weeks the gas-engine has been disestablished, and they are now going ahead fitting up the rest of their stock as fast as the requisite plant can be manufactured. Before long it is understood that the whole of the main line and suburban branches will be supplied.

That gas is an enormous improvement on oil, and that electricity in its turn is better than either, is a point on which the outside public has probably no doubt whatever. But a railway company has got to consider the question of cost as well. And on this latter it must depend how soon we shall be finally delivered from the filthy lamps that are only one stage better than the "blazing cressets fed with naphtha and asphaltus," that illuminated Pandemonium. One official of the Company gives the following as a rule-of-thumb formula. If oil lighting costs £100, then gas will cost £125, and electricity £150. Those, however, who have had practical experience say that, if electricity cannot hold its own in price already, at least there is no doubt that it will do so in the immediate future. Of course there must be a difference between different lines. On the "Underground," for instance, where light is constantly required, where, moreover, the stoppages are so frequent that the dynamos would never have time to charge the accumulators, gas is a suitable illuminant enough. But on the Brighton it would need to be kept burning all day, though only five minutes in the run from London to the sea-side is in the tunnels. So that electricity, which can be turned on instantaneously by the guard as the train enters the tunnel, and turned off equally instantaneously as it leaves it, is evidently used here under the most economical conditions. But a guard, who acts as one did some time back, and carefully turns the lights out at the entrance of each tunnel

and on again at the further end, has considerable opportunities for irritating the passengers. There is another defect, which, though of trifling importance, is of much more frequent occurrence. When the apparatus is in the tail van, the guard in charge is often only reminded to turn on the light, by his own van entering the tunnel, though the front carriages have been in darkness for the past 10 seconds. But this could no doubt be obviated, if it were thought worth while, by placing a second switch in the van at the other end, so that either guard could make the necessary contact. Probably, however, as the men get more accustomed to this new duty, the defect will obviate itself.

There is a good deal of originality about the Brighton rolling stock. For one thing, in the suburban, known technically as "block," trains, spring buffers are entirely dispensed with and the wooden headstocks, which are situated in the centre of the ends of the carriages are kept tight pressed against each other by the pull of a continuous drawbar that passes through the middle of them. A few years back these "block" trains were built with ten coaches apiece. To-day they are mostly running, such has been the growth of the traffic, with two, three, or four extra carriages attached to them. The Brighton also is one of the few companies that have complied with the spirit of the Act of Parliament requiring a communication to be established between passenger and guard. The great northern companies "keep the word of promise to the ear but break it to the sense." The common cord communication is little better than a farce. To imagine a nervous girl, or an invalid suddenly taken seriously ill, in the first instance collecting her thoughts to remember that, "though there are cords on both sides of the train, that over the window on the right-hand side in the direction in which the train is travelling is the one by which alone communication can be made," and then hauling in hand-over-hand the yards of slack rope along a train an eighth of a mile in length, is so ridiculous that, if a serious loss of life were to happen which a proper system of communication might have avoided, it would be long before the Company would hear the last of it.

Of course the companies have an answer to this charge. They would say that the chance of the communication really being needed is so infinitesimal, that they can spend the money in other ways to greater advantage for their passengers. And as the Board of Trade continues to accept the cord system as

sufficient, we may assume that its inspectors, who in the matters of signalling, structural stability, and so forth, are certainly exacting enough in their demands on behalf of the public safety, acquiesce in this view. But this line of argument, good though it undoubtedly is as a reason why Parliament should never have passed an Act making communication compulsory at all, is scarcely a justification, now that the Act has been passed, for the systematic tender of a useless imitation as a genuine article. In the early days of railways the need of communication between driver and guard was thought to be self-evident, and Lieutenant Le Count, of the London and Birmingham Railway, gives the following instructions as to the best method of effecting it : "The guard should have a check-string to the arm of the engine-driver, and a flexible hollow tube should be fixed from the guard's carriage to the engine, through which the men can converse, which the noise of the engine and train will otherwise render difficult."

On the Brighton line, except on the cheap excursions, which therefore, to comply with the Act, are stopped at Three Bridges, there is an electric bell in every compartment of every train, whether it travels 20 miles without stopping, or 20 chains. The principle is of the simplest. Two wires running the length of the train may be compared to the two sides of a ladder, which are joined together in each compartment by a rung that is broken clean through in the middle. Draw out the bell-pull in any compartment, and the broken rung is instantly mended; the circuit closed, and the bell in the guard's van begins to ring. There is a great deal in imagination, and even though a passenger may know that the signal is much more likely to be used to delay the train by some simple-minded old lady, who mistakes a boiling-hot-water tin for an infernal machine, than by himself to avert an accident, yet he is glad to see it and to know that it can be trusted to be in working order. Some of the German lines have gone beyond the Brighton Company in this matter, and have placed in each compartment a handle by which a passenger can himself apply the brakes directly without waiting to attract the attention of the guard.

Signs are not wanting that the end of the "battle of the brakes" is approaching, and that the end will be that the battle is pronounced drawn. That in a few years' time no passenger train will be run without brakes that are both continuous and automatic, may already be pronounced a certainty. This result

is a remarkable testimony to the irresistible force exerted by public opinion even in matters of which it can only pretend to understand the barest outlines. A few months back the loco-superintendent of one of the great lines, one of the most distinguished engineers in the country, told the present writer that he had studied every accident for the last fifteen years, and that not one of them could have been prevented by the use of an automatic brake. Yet he added that his own company were supplying automatic fittings to all their stock as fast as possible. But though a continuous automatic brake is accepted as a necessity, the battle is drawn to this extent, that there are two rival systems left in possession of the field,—the Westinghouse, and the "vacuum." Broadly speaking, Scotland is monopolised by the Westinghouse; England, except in the Brighton, Great Eastern, and North-Eastern districts, is the chosen home of the "vacuum."

There can be no doubt that, outside England, the Westinghouse is the system whose reputation is the highest. It is an open secret that in England "a prejudice against the Westinghouse has been excited in the minds of some railway authorities by the injudicious means"—we borrow the phrase from Mr. Rous Marten's admirable 'Notes on the Railways of Great Britain,' "adopted for pushing it." On the other hand, it is in England that the "vacuum" has been brought to its present perfection, while on the Continent and in America it is chiefly known in its earlier and cruder forms. The whole of the Brighton stock, except a few old carriages that are never used unless under the exceptional pressure of a Bank holiday or similar emergencies, is and has been for years past fitted with the Westinghouse brake. In the course of the half year ending June 30th, 1887, the brake was worked on trains which ran a little over three million miles. How many times it was applied in the whole six months is not recorded, but on one day, June 27th, a census was taken of the number of stoppages, and they amounted to 19,585. Trifling failures occurred on 20 occasions in all, or say, once in 150,000 times, and they caused a total delay of exactly one hour. On the other hand, the brake on three occasions saved the lives of persons who would otherwise have been run over. Nor does this exhaust its merits. "We could never work our trains to time," said a Brighton official to the writer a week or two back, "were it not for the Westinghouse. A dozen years back, when, trains were far lighter and the number of passengers getting in

and out at the stations much smaller, my table of a morning used to be littered over with letters complaining of unpunctuality. I scarcely get one such letter now." What continuous brakes have done for speed, to say nothing of punctuality and safety, may be shortly put in this form. An express twenty years back turned off steam and reduced speed a mile or a mile and a half before it reached a stopping station. A train, a dozen carriages in length, weighing, that is, about 200 tons, fitted with the Westinghouse brake, might run in to Paddington Station at 50 miles an hour, and be stopped with safety before it reached the further end of the platform.

We have said much of the Brighton carriages, it is time to say something of the Brighton engines. So let us begin with about the only fault that it is possible to find with them—their puzzling habit of bearing painted on their sides the names of places they are not going to. We might protest, too, that "Crawley" is, in any case, a name too opprobrious to be fastened upon any engine whose driver is expected to work his train to time. The 8.45 A.M. up from Brighton is probably one of the heaviest expresses in the world; on a Monday morning it at times starts with 26 coaches on, or say a gross load of 360 tons. To Redhill the journey is just 30 miles, and though it begins with a dead pull away from the curved platform up a gradient of 1 in 264, it must be accomplished to the minute, under penalty of having to crawl behind a South-Eastern stopping train all the way from Redhill to London. And be the day fine or rough, and be the rails dry or greasy, the run—30 miles in 40 minutes—is accomplished without fail. Nor does "Gladstone," to whose leadership the train is usually consigned, ever find it necessary to appeal to a colleague for support.

One cannot but feel at times on the Brighton train that the engines are so good that they would go faster if they were only asked to do so. The 5 P.M. down is allowed 37 minutes from Redhill, and often arrives at Brighton a minute or two before its time. The best of the Eastbourne trains takes 90 minutes for 65½ miles, or barely 44 miles an hour. In comparing this speed with the 54 miles an hour of the Great Northern, it should of course in fairness be remembered that the line out of London as far as Croydon, if not as far as Redhill, is terribly overcrowded and complicated with junctions. Further, a train that only goes 50 or 60 miles is at a disadvantage compared with one that goes 100 or 150. The longer the run, the less effect is produced upon

the average by the slow speed at starting which is due partly in running out of the Metropolis, partly to the fact that the engine has not yet warmed to "her" work, and begun to steam freely. Still, even allowing all this, that the light trains from which third-class passengers are excluded, and in some cases second-class passengers as well, should take 80 and 85 and 90 minutes over the 51 miles of comparatively level line between Brighton and Victoria, when some of the finest engines in the world are available to draw them, is a fact that hardly seems to carry its own explanation on its face. By the time these pages see the light, the Company will have running a new train undoubtedly better than anything at present in existence on the line. An express will, it is announced, on and after the first of July come up from Portsmouth to London Bridge every morning and go back every afternoon, 86½ miles without a stop, a good part of the way over very heavy gradients, in exactly two hours. Another very smart train has been put on, in the last few days. It comes up from St. Leonard's to London Bridge, 74½ miles in 105 minutes, say 42½ miles throughout. There is a corresponding train down in the afternoon from Victoria, but it is nine minutes slower.

We have spoken of the uniformity of the Brighton carriages ; the same may be said in at least an equal degree of the Brighton engines. When Mr. Stroudley entered the Company's service some twenty years since, he found 72 different classes of engines in use. To-day, the number of classes is more like half-a-dozen, and even of these many of the separate parts are interchangeable. As showing how every line has its own peculiarities, so that the practice of one company can never be the model for slavish imitation by another, it is worth quoting the description of the problem to be worked out on the Brighton line, as sketched by Mr. Stroudley in a paper before the Institute of Civil Engineers a year or two since. A railway 450 miles in length, of which 90 miles are within the metropolitan area, and 15 miles have either 3 or 4 pairs of rails. There are 94 junctions and 20 termini, from some of which the trains have to start away up gradients of 1 in 80 and 1 in 64. The passenger engines each stop on the average 93 times a day. Some of them are coupled up to 16 trains in the course of their day's work. The goods engines on the average can only get over 3½ miles in the hour. Fuel costs about 17s. a ton as against 6s. or 7s. in the case of the northern companies. Here are one or two results from these exceptional

conditions. Bogies have never been introduced on the engines. To do so would imply the construction of longer turntables, and longer turntables would mean in many cases—at Victoria, for instance—the purchase and destruction of adjoining property. Again, the high cost of fuel induces Mr. Stroudley to economise coal by warming with waste steam the water in the tank before it enters the boiler. One result of this economy is very obvious to passengers in the fact, that the Brighton engines frequently have the paint on their tenders all scorched and blistered.*

Let us notice one or two points more. The engines are built with their boilers at an unusual height above the ground. Not only does this make the machinery more accessible, but it has been found that, contrary to what might have been expected, engines with a high centre of gravity are the steadiest in running fast round curves. Each driver has beside him in his "cab" a speed indicator. A belt round one of the axles drives a miniature mill-wheel, that is contained in a chamber filled with water, and closed entirely except for a glass tube at the top. The faster the train runs, the quicker the mill-wheel turns, and the higher up the tube it throws the water; and a brass standard behind the tube gives the equivalent of the heights in miles per hour. Any one looking into the cab may also see painted up the name of the driver, a fact that perhaps goes some way towards explaining the spick and span appearance of the Brighton engines. In England, as a rule, a driver is, as far as possible, kept to one engine; on the Brighton line in particular, the two are as inseparable as a racehorse and his "lad." In America, on the other hand, the engines have no more individuality than so many omnibus horses. Driver and fireman will only work ten hours a day, but an engine need not stand still to be cleaned for more than eight hours out of the twenty-four. Accordingly, if there are fifty engines at a given shed, there will be eighty couples of men to drive them, who, as they come on duty, will take each day whatever engine comes first to hand. That the American system makes a more economical use of the vast capital locked up in locomotives—say £20,000,000 sterling in Great Britain alone—is obvious. But this advantage, ac-

* English engines are often said to be extravagant in coal consumption. Here is Mr. Stroudley's calculation; to an outsider, at least, whose standard is the amount of coal used in his own house to warm the drawing-room or to cook a leg of mutton, it will hardly seem excessive: "One pound of coal will convey one ton weight of train $13\frac{1}{2}$ miles at an average speed of $43\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour."

cording to the English authorities, is more than counterbalanced by the greater care taken by a driver of an engine for which he is individually responsible, and for which he feels a sentiment closely akin to affection. The English system therefore gains in economy of fuel and repairs more than it sacrifices in interest on capital. On such a point of course only experts can decide. But on the analogy of the "bus" horse and the racehorse, a layman may be permitted to suggest that, while the bulk of the American work is on freight trains—partakes, that is, of the omnibus nature—a man has need of all his jockeying to work an English express to time. And no one would expect a perfect stranger to get the last ounce of performance out of the Derby favourite.

The Great Northern can probably boast that they build the largest engines in England, the splendid "8 feet singles." The Brighton Company can certainly claim that they build the smallest, the tiny "A" class, better known as "Terriers." These wonderful little engines, with wheels less than 4 feet, and cylinders only 13 inches in diameter, can keep time on a level line with 16 coaches, and can even work their trains punctually over the very heavy gradients of the Thames Tunnel. To the pioneer of the class, the "Brighton," which obtained a gold medal at the Paris Exhibition in 1878, a fact which it has proclaimed ever since, proudly blazoned on its side, the travellers by the Dieppe route to Paris owe a debt of gratitude of which they are probably unconscious. The Brighton Company were occupied, so the story is told, in urging their partners, the *Chemin de Fer de l'Ouest*, to accelerate the boat trains between Paris and Dieppe. They even had gone so far as to hint that 40 miles an hour was a not impossible speed. "Forty miles an hour!" said the astonished Frenchmen, "and over such a line! Could you do it?" Mr. Stroudley took them at their word, hitched the pigmy "Brighton" on to the French train, and drew it into Paris at this phenomenal pace. The argument was convincing, the *Ouest* surrendered at discretion, and promised that in future they would run their trains, mile for mile, as fast as the Brighton ran theirs. National prejudice may make us suspect that this truly sporting offer is not unconnected with the fact that the Chairman of the *Ouest* is an Englishman. But honesty compels us to confess that the English trains often lose time between London and Newhaven, while the French ones arrive at Dieppe to the moment.

Nor must national prejudice lead us to refuse to the *Ouest* their fair share of the credit for the admirable steamers that run between Newhaven and Dieppe, as they more than half belong to the French Company. In days when the Calais service was still worked by those horrible little cock-boats, the 'Wave,' and the 'Foam,' and the 'Breeze,' whose very names suggested their infinite possibilities of unnecessary motion, the Newhaven steamers were already of a respectable size. For years past, the 'Normandy,' and the 'Brittany,' fine roomy vessels with engines of 2500 horse-power, have covered the 75 miles from pier to pier (the 64 miles given in *Bradshaw* are geographical, not statute miles), at the rate of 20 miles an hour. And this year the 'Normandy,' and the 'Brittany' are being superseded. The 'Rouen,' will be running by the time these lines are published, and the 'Paris,' will follow a few days later. Seeing these steamers in their unfinished state, as the writer saw them a week or two back in John Elder's yard at Fairfield, one can realize the cost at which the high speeds of modern vessels are attained. The 'Brittany' had engines of about 2500 horse-power, and went 18 knots; to get 19 out of the 'Rouen,' which is only a very little bigger, the horse-power is increased by an additional thousand. The whole of the middle of the vessel is given up to machinery, boilers, stokeholes and coal bunkers, which combine to weigh some 470 tons out of the total 900 tons of the ship's displacement. As for cargo, there is hardly room for more than the passengers' luggage. Fore and aft are large cabins which have one feature for which travellers should be grateful, a special system of artificial ventilation. Fresh air is introduced through gratings in the floor, and the vitiated air is drawn off all round the sides through tubes which are led into the engine-funnels. These funnels, by the way, are made double, in order to prevent the heat from them being disagreeable to passengers on the promenade deck. There are eight boats, four of them collapsible ones, occupying only a few inches of space against the bulwarks, and all of them provided with patent launching gear.

The service from London to Paris *via* Dieppe is advertised as the "shortest and cheapest" route, and though the accuracy of railway advertisements is not always above suspicion, as there are occasionally several shortest routes between two points, just as there are several newspapers possessing "the largest circulation in the world," in this case the claim can be well sustained.

By Dover and Calais the fare is 61s., the distance 286 miles; *via* Folkestone and Boulogne, the fare is 57s., the distance 259 miles; by Newhaven and Dieppe the fare is 34s. for 257 miles; a distance that might be reduced to 237, if the *Ouest* would run *via* Pontoise instead of Rouen as at present. On this side the water, the Brighton Company are spending a large sum of money, if not to shorten, at least to improve their road, and are entirely reconstructing the whole of the entrances into Lewes Station, where six different lines meet, so that the trains from London to Newhaven and Eastbourne may have a straight run instead of the present tortuous curves. In the last few weeks also they have commenced to run a Pullman Car upon the day tidal train. In another direction, however, we cannot but think they hardly avail themselves to the full of their advantages. For reasons best known to its directors—perhaps because their 16 per cent. dividend is already embarrassingly large—the Northern of France refuse to establish through bookings from Paris to the great northern towns of England. Over the *Ouest*, on the other hand, they have long been in operation. Now, seeing that the North-Western and the Great Eastern run their own trains to Croydon, that the North-Western runs into Victoria as well where also the Great Western, the Midland, and the Great Northern run into the adjoining Chatham Company's station, it certainly seems surprising that the Brighton has not yet arranged for through carriages from, say, Doncaster, Manchester, and Bristol, in the same way as is done by the Great Eastern to Harwich.

There are two objections to the Newhaven route, which, when combined, are sufficiently powerful to reduce the number of passengers who use it to less than a third of those who go by Calais, and only two-thirds of those *via* Folkestone. The sea-passage is three times as long, and the service is a tidal one. The former objection is for those who enter upon a sea voyage with sinkings of the heart, and continue it with sinkings of a different organ, unfortunately insurmountable; but the latter will be obviated by this time next year. For a long time past operations have been in force on both sides of the Channel for deepening and improving the entrance to the harbours. At Dieppe the cost, which has been, relatively speaking, small, has been borne mainly by the Government, not unassisted by the capitation levied upon every passenger—nine-tenths of them English—who lands or disembarks. At Newhaven the English Government have confined their support to the appointment of

Select Committees and Royal Commissions at intervals during the last half-century. The result of the unanimous recommendations of these bodies that the improvement of Newhaven Harbour should be undertaken at the public expense as a matter of national importance, has been that the Harbour Board, which is very much the *alter ego* of the Railway Company, has been left to sink half a million of its own money at the bottom of the sea, and has nearly completed a breakwater over half a mile in length. It has also dredged the entrance to the main channel of the river to a depth that will soon allow the packets, which draw under nine feet, to enter and come alongside the quays at low-water spring tides. A service between London and Paris in nine hours, starting at fixed times, will it is hoped be in operation in time for the Exhibition traffic to Paris next summer.

The method on which the Newhaven breakwater has been designed and constructed by Mr. Banister, the Company's Engineer, is so new, at least on the scale on which it is here employed, that it deserves a detailed description. From foundation to the coping of the parapet wall the breakwater is one solid and continuous block of concrete. Above the water-line the concrete is run in inside a framework of boards in a fashion that is common enough. It is in the preparation of the submarine foundations that the originality of the method, which was first adopted by Mr. Cay at Aberdeen, is to be found. The concrete is mixed rapidly, confined in huge bags containing 100 tons apiece, and dropped instantly to the bottom of the sea, where after adapting itself to the natural configuration of the ground or the space between its neighbour bags, it is left to harden gradually. Let us sketch the process as it may be seen in operation any day at high tide, except when there is a strong wind from the west. On the quay is erected a big timber-framed shed, from which there projects over the water what looks like a huge iron drain-pipe. This is the mouth of the mixer. Beneath it, is moored a lighter, 100 feet in length, driven by twin screw-engines, and fitted amidships with a well 40 feet long, 8 feet wide, and about 6 feet deep. The well is closed at the bottom by iron folding-doors on which the water is just awash. A great sheet of jute sacking, with brass-bound eyelet-holes all round, is spread out, covering the bottom of the well and overlapping the sides. This is the bag to contain the concrete. And now the mixer is set in motion. The rollers above mix and draw downwards the cement and sand and shingle of which

the concrete is formed, and it begins to pour out in a thick and constant stream from the mouth of the drain-pipe. Twenty minutes elapse, the well is filled from end to end with a mass composed of some twenty truck-loads of shingle and sand, and 120 sacks of concrete ; at a sign from the lighter the mixer is stopped. The twin screws revolve, and off we set to the scene of action.

No sooner are we started than the crew begin to lace up the bag, and by the time we reach the head of the breakwater, three-quarters of a mile away, all is ready for the next step. The vessel slackens speed, till, as she approaches her destination, the motion is scarcely perceptible. A man stands beside the bolt which holds together the folding-doors on which the bag is resting, with hammer uplifted in act to strike. "Now!" shouts the foreman of the gang, as the marks by which he reckons come into line. Crash! the blow descends, and with a mighty "Ugh!" the mass disappears, leaving a great chasm through which the blue sea surges up in a solid column, to fall again in fountains of foam on the deck, as the vessel, relieved of its burden, springs upward and shakes itself like a huge Newfoundland. Leaving the bag with its £5 worth of jute and £30 worth of concrete lying comfortably beside its bedfellows at the bottom the sea, the lighter turns round and makes for the shore. On the way back the doors are closed and refastened, and a fresh bag is unrolled and spread out upon them, ready to commence again the moment the vessel comes alongside the mixer. And in this fashion each high tide sees two, and sometimes three bags dropped, till the foundation of the breakwater is raised above low-water mark. A separate staff then undertakes the task of levelling this foundation and erecting the superstructure upon it.

Till recently the Brighton Company ran boats to France from Littlehampton as well as from Newhaven, but they have now concentrated all their steamers at the latter port. For though the passenger traffic by this road is small compared with that of the short sea routes, the goods traffic is very large and implies a regular service of cargo boats. Why ladies in London should need to get their hats from Paris, while men in Paris require theirs made in London may be difficult to explain, but the fact is certain and the rates are remunerative. Fish, too, is sent across the Channel from side to side in immense quantities, often 30 or 40 tons of mackerel or herring in a single consignment,

according as the price may happen for the moment to rule higher in Paris or London—an obstinate fact this for the people who assert that the railway rates are so high as to cripple the fish trade. Indeed the quantity of food poured into Newhaven is almost incredible. Butter, eggs sent through from Lombardy in half-train loads, asparagus, and so forth, enter in a never-ending stream. For one month last summer the total was 6000 tons, including, for one item, 190 tons of Italian cherries in a single steamer. In return, and in consideration of a duty of 50 francs apiece, the Government of the French Republic is good enough to permit us to supply its citizens with bicycles. In the river above Newhaven lies moored a vessel, whose short if useful career has been brought to a premature end. The 'Carrier' was bought a year or two back to carry goods in the railway trucks, and horses in their boxes, across from Langston Harbour to Brading in the Isle of Wight. The advantages of the scheme were obvious; but unfortunately the expenses were constant, and the consignments only intermittent; the vessel, with her broad square bows, could run but slowly, and could not venture out at all unless the weather was fine; and in the last month or two the service has been abandoned.

It is now about half a century since railway shareholders first began to urge directors to close their capital accounts. With the best intentions in the world to comply with their proprietors' instructions, no line has closed its capital account yet. Perhaps it would not be a very rash thing to prophesy that, at least till England begins to decline, no line ever will. At the present moment the Brighton Company has somewhere about half a million of capital, mainly unproductive, invested in the construction of a new line from Oxted to Groombridge. The fact that when it is open, it will afford a competitive route from London to Tunbridge Wells, is no doubt a legitimate subject for congratulation to the inhabitants, as their fares by the direct line have hitherto been calculated not on the distance but on the time taken by the trains, but it is questionable whether the traffic will be sufficient to fatten the shareholders of two companies. In any case the Brighton Company has made the line sorely against its will. The history of how it came to do so—and the instance is a typical one—is shortly as follows. It had obtained an Act and begun the construction of a line through Oxted to Edenbridge and Groombridge more than twenty years ago. In the financial crisis of 1867 the Brighton Company, which had too

many irons in the fire at once, got into difficulties, and the following year a new Act was obtained, authorizing the abandonment of various undertakings. From that day to this there has figured this item in the half-yearly report under the head of "Expenditure on Capital Account :" "On lines abandoned under the Company's Act, 1868, £216,400 4s. 7d." Years afterwards, the Company having meanwhile resumed its normal position as a prosperous concern, a line was made to Oxted, but instead of following the former route to Groombridge, it was continued to East Grinstead. Naturally the residents along the original road felt aggrieved, and the outcome of their disappointment was the promotion of an independent line. The new undertaking, however, could obviously not afford to provide an independent access to London, so Parliament was asked to give running powers over the Brighton to London Bridge. For two companies to work over one set of metals into London Bridge is bad enough, as the public has lately had occasion to know ; to admit a third to partnership would have been simply disastrous. The Brighton opposed and defeated the Bill. The same thing happened the following year. Finally, as the best way out of the difficulty, it undertook to make and work the line itself.

The Company has recently had to spend a large sum of money on an even less satisfactory object. On the 27th of July last, the Wednesday afternoon in Goodwood week, the Betchworth tunnel under the grounds of Deepdene, on the direct line *via* Dorking and Horsham to Portsmouth, suddenly collapsed. The running sand, through which the tunnel is carried, burst in like water through a broken dam, but, unlike water, did not drain away again. The traffic back from Goodwood had to be sent round by Three Bridges, and the line was blocked and remained closed till the following March. To plug the leak, so to say, involved the expenditure of £20,000, and the practical reconstruction of the tunnel, and the whole experience is said to have been unique in English engineering history.

One word in conclusion on a matter to which allusion has already been made. It is an instance of the irony of fate that it is to a report drawn up, in his capacity of Secretary to the Board of Trade, by the present Chairman of the Brighton Railway, that the public owes the benefit of Mr. Gladstone's Cheap Trains Act of 1844. The Brighton Company runs six trains a day limited to first-class passengers only. In all the British Isles there are, we believe, but two others. The one is the

special Sunday morning mail from Dublin to Queenstown. The other leaves Stoke at 10.50 P.M. for Crewe, and "conveys first-class passengers only, on signing a form indemnifying the Company from all liability in case of accident to the train, &c." What the dangers may be that lurk behind that innocent-looking word, " &c." we know not, but no doubt the North Staffordshire Company is correct in assuming that it needs the high-bred courage of a first-class passenger to encounter them uninsured. Even the "Queen's messenger" trains on Deeside have this summer abandoned the restriction to first-class. In addition, the Brighton Company have nine other trains from which third-class passengers are excluded. Not counting the boat trains to Queenborough, Dover, and Folkestone, which cannot be expected to carry third-class passengers as long as the Continental companies refuse to admit them to the corresponding trains on the further side, the rest of Great Britain can show but eight. Now it is true, as we have already said, that some of the Brighton expresses are already as heavy as they could possibly be. To admit third-class passengers would mean the duplication of these trains. It is true too, that since the express fares to Brighton were abolished a few months back, the whole sum has been practically a dead loss to the Company. The lowering of the fares from 12s. 6d. to 10s. has failed to attract a single extra passenger into the superior class. But for all that, I cannot believe that the circumstances of the Brighton Company are so exceptional that the policy of restriction, which has been deliberately abandoned as mistaken elsewhere, can in the long run be profitable here. I have shown that season-ticket holders are the best and most favoured customers of the Company, and season-ticket holders certainly on the average pay less than third-class rates. Even if the direct loss were at first considerable, I should still advocate the change. In these days of fierce competition between different seaside resorts, it is hardly possible for a Company to pay too dearly in order to purchase a reputation for liberality.

W. M. ACWORTH.



From a Salmon's Point of View.

THEY were a select circle of fish.

The month was June, late June, and the fishmonger's shop looked invitingly cool with its huge blocks of Swedish ice, its waving greenery of ferns and palms, its shining marble slabs, and its big crystal bowls full of gold and silver fish, so dear to the heart of certain of our modern painters.

The central figure of the group was a princely salmon, a superb fish, weighing 42 pounds and measuring 42 inches from the point of his delicate nose to the tip of his powerful tail.

On his right were three turbots, aristocratic fish, proudly conscious of their unspotted backs. The left was occupied by two glistening grilse from a Scottish river, and a basket of trout up that morning from the Test. Closing the group were half-a-dozen pairs of soles, and a Doggerbank cod ; the latter personage was distinctly understood to be in a lower grade of finny society, but had been admitted on account of his size. There were, besides, several sea-trout, sparkling and lusty ; a few red mullet, and some live blue lobsters, handsome fellows, throwing their spotted claws about in indolent ease.

"As silly as a fish !" said the salmon meditatively. "I have constantly heard that remark fall from the lips of human beings, and I have always listened to it with contempt. I call it the hare-brained chatter of irresponsible frivolity," he added slowly, unconsciously quoting the words of the greatest statesman of the century. "Of course,"—he proceeded, after a pause, during which no one refuted his assertion, "of course there are exceptions to every rule. I have known, I don't say I have known personally, but I have *heard*, of even salmon evincing remarkable stupidity—a salmon, for instance, who would take a pickled prawn ; but after lengthy and serious consideration of the question, I have come to the conclusion that with us, sense,

and the absence of sense, varies according to our degrees of birth. All well-born fishes are sensible."

There was a second pause. Each of his hearers was mentally deciding his or her claim to the distinction of wisdom.

The turbots scarcely troubled to think about it at all ; all the world had settled the question for them ! The trout put their noses in the air directly ; likewise the red mullet. The lobsters were happy, also the soles ; the only person disturbed in mind was the cod, and he was wise enough to be silent.

"The fact of our being caught does not prove that we are foolish," observed a sea-trout thoughtfully.

"Certainly not. When human beings assert this, they are proving their own lamentable ignorance of our sentiments and our traditions," answered the salmon. "We love to be caught. We glory in being caught. We live to be caught. We are only a little particular as to the mode in which the operation is effected. Yes, I take it that all the fish in our set are eminently sensible ; but no doubt when you descend to a lower grade you find abundant evidences of folly. Those common fellows, for instance, as low as—as—"

"As a crab," suggested a blue lobster lazily.

"Or a lemon-sole," added a lady sole eagerly, "they are frightfully common, I assure you. Coarse pushing creatures, always trying to pass themselves off as members of our family. They have positively no breeding."

"They may be low," continued the King of Fish, when her indignation had subsided ; "but I mean fish of a lower class still. The—a—what do you call them ? I don't know their names. Those fellows who will take anything, you know ? Can be caught with a yard of string, and a crooked pin, and a worm—"

"Gudgeon," put in a grilse ; "wretched little chaps. Not so bad though," he added good-naturedly, "when you get to know them."

"How can you be a judge?" inquired a turbot, coldly, emphasising the pronoun.

The grilse blushed.

"I—a.—They asked me to give away some prizes for them—at a school-treat—once—" he explained in slight confusion.

"You are young," said the salmon, paternally, "otherwise you would not have accepted such an invitation."

"Young !" echoed the second grilse, resenting the remark, "I like that ! we are six-pounders ; both of us."

"Boys, mere boys," laughed the monarch. "If you knew as much of the world as I do, now!"

"I suppose, Sir, you have had wonderful adventures," murmured a young trout, shyly. She thought the salmon the most magnificent thing she had ever seen; but to be sure she had not seen much beyond the clear reaches and brown pebbles of her home in the Test.

"So-so, nothing wonderful; but I have had my share," he returned, with a kindly glance at the pretty, silvery little creature. "I come from Norway."

The fact produced a sensation.

The blue lobsters, never having been further afield than the "Devil's Throat," off Cromer, were particularly interested.

"Spin us a yarn," said one, who affected nautical expressions.

"If a few details of my life would amuse you, I don't mind giving them."

The salmon loved the sound of his own voice. It was his one weakness, shared with the larger half of humanity.

There was a mild chorus of supplication. "Please do! Pray do! We should be charmed."

The soles heaved their gills half open in order to listen better.

"I was born in the latter end of September, in the sand of a lovely river that flung itself into a Norwegian fjord," he began, slowly. "I was one of a large family. There were about two thousand of us, I believe, but it is difficult to remember accurately. Most of us died early. I had many narrow escapes from early death myself. You see there was a good deal to fight against. Before we were out of the sand the mergansers, or river-ducks, were down upon us, gobbling us up a dozen at once; and by the time those that were left of us were frisky young fry, and able to get out into the rapid currents of the river, every sea-trout, every brown trout, every bull-trout, and every big fish that swam by had a meal of us."

A fine sea-trout at this point looked distinctly uncomfortable.

"He might have left that out, I think," he muttered to his neighbour.

But the salmon continued serenely:—

"I shall never forget my first sight of the fjord. I wish I could describe to you the incomparable beauty of the Norwegian fjords. I know them well, and at all seasons of the year. They

are arms of the sea, winding far inland between mighty mountain walls which rise—without shore or shingle—sheer up from the water's edge."

"We have scenery just as fine in Scotland," interrupted a grilse.

"Indeed!" said the salmon, politely. He was too well-bred to say he did not believe it; besides, the grilse was a connection.

"Our fjord was ten miles long, and four miles across, and three hundred fathoms deep. To see it in June, when we were leaving it for the river, was a sight to make you jump. The highest mountain summits were white with snow, and the lower slopes were black with pine forests, and here and there were grey granite headlands seamed with the silver of tumbling water-falls. The clouds floated overhead and purple shadows swept over the bosom of the fjord, and sometimes the spring showers fell in the sunshine, and the rainbows arched the green valleys or gleamed softly against the dark background of fir-trees. As you swam along you could see the houses of the fishermen, dotted here and there; funny little places, built of pine-logs, with over-hanging roofs, and painted in bright colours, scarlet, and green, and yellow. Very lonely they must find the life there, particularly in the long white winters, for then the women have it all to themselves, and the men sail away to the great fisheries off the Lofoden Islands among the ice-floes of the Northern seas. They are plucky fellows, those Norwegian fishermen; the best sailors in the world——"

"Hold hard there!" interrupted the nautical lobster, "haul in your line a bit. How about the English Jack Tars?"

"I know nothing of the English Jack Tars," pursued the salmon placidly, "except that when I have been as far north as the North Cape, I have met seals from the Arctic Seas who have told me of English sailors who have dared our ice and snow, and had reason to repent their rashness. As I was saying, the Norwegian boatmen of the fjords are fine fellows. If they would give up their abominable habit of running out their nets from the rocks at every point along the coast, I should have nothing to say against them. You know of course that to be netted is an intolerable disgrace. I mean," he added hastily for the turbots were stiffening visibly, "I mean, regarding the matter *from a Salmon's point of view*."

"Perhaps you will explain," said the soles, frigidly.

"To a salmon," he replied, "the only process of catching considered honourable is to be caught in a salmon river by an experienced angler with rod and line. I am sorry to say that these nets frequently prevent members of our House from attaining that distinction. On dark nights it is difficult to distinguish them in the water, and the unwary or fool-hardy fish coming up the fjords from the open sea swim straight into them. I had a narrow escape myself once. I had been cautioned about the traps, and had passed them on the safe side many times, but one night: how was it?—Ah! I remember: there had been a small coasting steamer wrecked, and a case of champagne got down to us, and—a—we opened it, and the next thing I knew clearly was finding myself in one of these wretched snares. I had a bad quarter of an hour, I assure you, but as luck would have it, the net was an old one, and I smashed the meshes, and got away. Phew! It was a close shave! But at that time," added the salmon, with a malicious twinkle of his glassy eye, "I was a grilse!"

"Prosy old porpoise!" muttered the Scottish fish who had last spoken, "he bores me to death. If I am not sold in the next ten minutes I shall die of ennui."

"Yes," continued the veteran, dreamily, "it is a grand thing to be caught with a good waterproof braided silk American line, on a fine 'Dusty Miller,' by a man who knows how to play his fish well. The highest distinction of all, however, that can fall to a salmon is to be caught by a lady. But that happens very seldom, very seldom indeed. I don't know, up all the rivers flowing into our fjord, of more than twenty salmon who have attained the dignity this season. There may be more, possibly, but I had not heard of them when I left, and such rare occurrences get noised abroad very rapidly."

"Were you caught by a lady?" asked the young trout.

The salmon sighed.

"No. I am too heavy and old, my dear. I have lost my figure. It is the handsome slim young gallants, from eighteen up to twenty-five pounds who achieve that success. But I don't complain. I have had a fair run of luck and some capital fun in my time. It was worth being born to have had one run up our river in the month of June. It is five miles of fast-flowing water issuing from Lake Osen, and sliding down between the wooded spurs of the Veset mountains in a zig-zag course like a perpetual flash of forked lighting. It is full of whirling rapids,

roaring fosses, and glorious pools. Ah! to see the white foam curling over the black rock-heads as we turned the last point of the fjord and tore on for home! to have the welcome thunder of the torrent in your ears! to be in it at last, in the rush and swirl and splendour of the wild waters, leaping to meet them as only a salmon can leap, round the rocks, up the rocks, fighting the snow-swollen waves, exulting in the freshness of the cold sparkling spray, exulting in the strength of fin and tail, half mad with the ecstasy of the roar and the ring of the rapids! Ah! it was the perfection of existence, my friends, and it makes me young again to remember it.

"When we had ascended the first foss or two, there were broad reaches of swift, but calmer water. There you could swim along smoothly and enjoy the view. The verdure of pine and fir and white-barked birch came down to the river's edge in some places; in others, the flower-filled grass of the little valley-meadows, standing thick for hay, dipped away and climbed up to many a boatman's wooden home that looked down from its green plateau on the mountain side. Herds of cattle feed in the mountains. Every cow has a bell round her neck. You could listen to the musical tinkling far up the heights as you lounged up the stream on a warm afternoon. At night you stopped in your favourite pool for dinner; but I mislead you. There is no night in the wonderful Junes of Norway. Our sun is bright in the heavens till close on midnight, and between the time of his setting and rising our skies are luminous with the magical northern light that is as clear, and pearly, and beautiful, as—as a salmon's scales. Forgive the egotism of the simile," added the old warrior, "I was thinking of my wife."

The trout smiled. The grilse sneered; they were not married.

"One had ample opportunity, in the smoother currents, of watching the anglers," the salmon proceeded. "That was very entertaining. There are of course many types of fishermen, and a fish of even two seasons gets to know them all. There is the Novice. We can tell him at a glance. All his tackle is new; he is always over-dressed and shows himself too much. We despise him; but we take his bait occasionally for the fun of the thing, and then disappoint him by pulling off. Sometimes we make his hook fast to the weeds; he thinks he has a twenty pounder on and winds for his life: if the top of his rod breaks it is grand sport for us.

"There is the Simple Idiot. The man who knows absolutely nothing about the habits or tastes of a salmon, and yet persists in wasting his time on the river and swearing at his ill luck. He is the sort of angler who will bring out a fly after heavy rain, when the river is swollen and muddy with melted ice and snow from the upper heights, full of 'snow broth,' as we call it. Of course he ought to use spoon bait or a silver phantom. If he does offer a decent bait by accident and you take it, he will run you at once to land, probably into some shallows, and out of sheer disgust you break away. We despise him also."

"Then there is the angler who hooks, but can't play his fish cleverly. Jerks his rod directly he feels a touch, and tosses the bait clean out of your mouth before you have had time to taste it. Sometimes as you swing round the hook will fasten into your tail or back. That, as you can imagine, is excessively humiliating to any high-spirited fish. It is not as absolutely intolerable as the netting, but it outrages one's sense of propriety, it ruffles one's equanimity, it annoys one, it is like—"

"Like being served without oyster-sauce," suggested the cod.

It was the first remark he had ventured to make, and it proved a heavy failure.

There was dead silence in the select circle, broken at length by the largest turbot.

"If you were of our order," he said crushingly, "you would be aware that no well-bred fish retains the faintest consciousness after he has been cooked."

"Not the remotest consciousness," chorused the rest.

"To refer to 'sauce' of any kind, more particularly *fish* sauce, is distinctly indelicate," concluded the turbot witheringly.

"An insufferable set of prigs!" soliloquized the offender. "The airs they give themselves are horrible. And I a Doggerbank cod too! I wish I were across the shop with the haddocks and whitings; they do appreciate me."

"As I was saying," said the salmon, when his royal nerves had rallied from the shock, "there are many types of salmon-fishermen. None are more objectionable to my mind than the Lazy Lot. I have swum past them scores of times. People who hang out a rod and line from either side of the boat, and sit down and read a novel! The boatmen have to stick to their oars unremittingly, for in parts of our river the currents are so strong that two powerful Norwegians, persistently rowing, cannot do more than keep the boat steady in the stream; and this

most of them do with consummate skill. There was one lazy fellow that I knew well. One afternoon I determined to give him a lesson. His nose was deep in his book—I conjecture he had got to a thrilling page. I took his ‘blue doctor’ (rather a poor sort of fly) sharp, and made straight down stream at a thundering pace, reeling out fifty yards of line. Then I doubled, ran right under his boat, shook the hook clear of my mouth, and swam quietly away. His face was a study. If he had been alert and alive to his work, we might have had a fight of it. Bah! those novel-reading salmon-catchers! They are not worth a tussle. I like a man who never takes his eyes off the current, works every inch of the water, varies the *menu*, tempts you now with the choicest fly, now with a tasty minnow and gratefully recognizes the slightest touch.”

“Were you ever hooked in the tail?” queried a red-mullet curiously.

“Once. By a good fisherman too, strange to say; perhaps it was my fault. I had been taking an afternoon nap and was not quite awake, and foolishly crossed his line just as the boat turned. But I did not endure the indignity long. I was a strong fish then, and I tore for the rapids faster than he could follow, head-first down stream, whisked the line round a boulder, snapped it like tinder, and went out to sea to cool for half-an-hour. I carried the hook for the rest of my life, however. You can see the mark now. He was a good angler, that: I really felt sorry for him. He knew the fibre of a salmon’s mouth to a nicety, gave you your head, eased the line at the right second, though never slackening a perfect tension. He was so good-tempered about it, so patient and painstaking, that I really had made up my mind previously that he and no one else should draw me to shore, and he did too. That was a magnificent fight—my last. Two good hours, if it was a minute.”

“Tell us about it,” said a sea-trout eagerly, as the salmon paused to revel in memories of recent glory.

“He was an Englishman,” said the salmon slowly, bowing to the blue lobsters, “and I believe he was what they call an ‘Oxford man,’ whatever that term may mean—it conveys no impression to my mind. He was on the river one warm morning, two of the best boatmen with him—neat hands with the gaff, some are such clumsy brutes. He was trailing a ‘Durham Ranger,’ a pretty fly, and it was dancing appetisingly on the stream. I swam round it two or three times, debating whether I should take it

or not. Old as I am, I felt as fresh as spring water. I could see his tackle was good. All my best friends were with me. The pools were crowded. It was a consummation for which I had waited long, and I felt that if I allowed such a chance to escape me I might never get a second. So finally I rose slowly and steadily, took the fly well, dived with it to the bottom of the pool below, and then sped off down-stream at an even pace running out his line freely.

"He was on land in half a minute, and running along the bank clearing stones and bushes as he went, and keeping his rod beautifully high and steady. I made straight for Island Rapid, but turned at the top and rested for a minute or two. I knew what he would do : I had not mistaken my man : his play was superb. He began to wind his reel very cautiously, very gently—so gently that the motion would have been almost imperceptible to a youngster. I enjoyed it. I allowed him to draw me within twenty yards of him, and then—poof ! away I shot again like a rocket, down to the rapid, and through it this time right into the reach above our last sea-foss. He was there almost as soon as I was, and then a genuine struggle began. Three-and-twenty times did I let him haul me gradually and cleverly to almost within touch of the gaff, and as often did I sweep tantalisingly seawards, hearing his reel sing behind me as I flashed along. I never admired his pluck and his patience more than I did that day. As they should be, those were the proudest two hours of my existence. The excitement in the river was exceptional. All our reporters were there. I expect they speak of it now in the fjord as the fight of the season. Ah ! of twenty seasons ! I can hear our fellows cheering now as they cheered when I was gaffed and landed. It may be," concluded the old hero, with an accent of regret, "it may be a sorrowful thing to reflect that one's triumphs once tasted pass by for ever. But I am happy. I have reached the end of my life in honour : and there remains for me now only the crowning lustre of——"

"Marlborough House !" said the fishmonger to his men. He was standing in the centre of the shop reading from a list. "The orders have just come down. That's our best fish : send him."

A. N. J.

Public Schools in the Olden Time.

IN the year 1860 in the Epilogue of the Latin play, which since the days of Queen Elizabeth has been performed by the boys of Westminster School, the ghost of the great Dr. Busby, for fifty-seven years Headmaster of Westminster, was brought upon the stage. He complained in excellent Latin verses of a report, which had drawn him from his rest, that the school was to be shifted from the old premises into the country, and solemnly warned them that he had buried a treasure beneath the buildings. They forthwith proceeded to dig, and presently unearthed a gigantic birch. The venerable Shade then explained to them that, so long as they took that with them, the future of the school was assured.

“En tibi Busbeius quas sepeliret opes !

* * * * *

Aurea virga tibi est, portas quæ pandit honorum.”

I know no story which better illustrates the spirit of the old Public Schools which form the subject of this paper. New boys have much reason to be thankful that they were not born a hundred years ago. I doubt if there were half-a-dozen dormitories in England where they could have ventured to say their prayers the first night without being tossed in a blanket. For in these old bad dormitories the knees seldom touched the floor, but frequently the ceiling. The general life, indeed, was terribly rough. At Winchester, for instance, all washing was performed in the open air at a place called Moab. It consisted merely of half-a-dozen taps, which stuck out of the wall of the Quadrangle, and in frosty weather it was the duty of one of the juniors to thaw with a candle the ice that had gathered upon them. Just fifty years ago a deputation from the boys of Long Chamber at Eton requested the authorities that water might be laid on in College

instead of having to be fetched every morning by some of their number from outside. The request was promptly refused, with the scornful comment that "they would no donbt be wanting gas and Turkey carpets next."

Yet life at Westminster was rougher still. The windows in the dormitory, which were frequently broken by the various missiles that flew about, were never mended till the end of the half. When the frost penetrated keenly through these apertures, it was the unpleasant duty of the fags to rise, and fetch water from outside, and make a great slide down the centre of the chamber. Rats abounded everywhere. On one occasion a young nobleman woke up to find one of these interesting creatures hanging to his ear. Archbishop Longley, when a boy there, once missed his surplice while dressing for chapel. After a careful search, he at last espied the corner of it sticking out of a rat-hole, whence he extricated it with no small difficulty in such a condition as you may imagine. Nor were matters much better elsewhere. Dearer to the great scholar Porson than any memories of Greek and Latin scholarship were the visions of the happy rat-hunts he had had as a boy in Long Chamber at Eton. Nothing, however, can show better the beggarliness of the general arrangements in the Public Schools of that time than a Westminster story of a son of the great Lord Mansfield. The poor boy was ill, and Lady Mansfield came down to the school to see him. She found him in the sick room, seated upon a wooden chair, which was the only piece of furniture in the room, with the exception of the coal-scuttle. Upon this there was seated a boy, who had come to ask after young Murray, and, when Lady Mansfield entered, this boy rose, and with the most perfect natural politeness and good breeding offered her Ladyship the coal-scuttle.

Such were the arrangements at the old schools with regard to lodging. Those with regard to board were little better. At Winchester the Collegers consisted of seventy boys, eighteen of whom had the right of fagging the rest. As soon as these god-like eighteen had taken their places, dinner began. There was no proper provision of servants to wait. Presently the air resounded with shouts of "Junior ! Junior!" and in a few moments the hungry juniors were sent flying in every direction—to Colson's hatch for salt, to the kitchen for gravy, to school for something forgotten, up to chambers for a pint pot, down to the cellar for beer. In the centre of the Hall stood two Prefects,

armed with ash plants, with which they struck the juniors as they passed—not for any fault committed, but in order to promote a rapid circulation of fags. When at length the multifarious errands had been finished, the juniors generally found that the dinner had been cleared away. It will hardly be believed that at breakfast tea was served out, not in the Hall itself, but in the kitchen, which was about two hundred yards away. Fags of to-day, who have a turn for mathematics, observing how many cups their master takes, can easily calculate the number of miles that this arrangement would cost them during the term.

To set against all this there were the joys of illicit cookery. Batter-pudding, made in one's neighbour's clean stocking-foot, may well have been a questionable joy. But who can have any doubt about whiskey punch at midnight in the dormitory, made in a washhand-basin, ladled out in a teacup tied to a toasting-fork? Yet here again the fags had the worst of it, for it was they who had to fetch from a neighbouring tavern the spirits which supplied these juvenile revels, and if caught in their illicit errand, they were flogged—no questions asked. In connection with this, one should perhaps mention the subject of drunkenness. This was a regular vice of the old schools. It was by no means unknown at Eton. It was, until comparatively modern times, a serious mischief at Harrow, and even in Dr. Arnold's time it was a recognized vice at Rugby, as may be seen by a reference to the Doctor's sermons.

If we turn to the outdoor life we find things very different from now. Cricket and football, which are, so to speak, the sun and moon of schoolboy athletics, were not yet supreme. Among the long list of games in vogue at Eton in the last century, we find such names as Hop Scotch, Marbles, Puss in the Corner, and even Conquering Lobs, whatever Conquering Lobs may be. At Rugby football was unknown in the seventeenth century. Indeed it has been proved to the satisfaction of all but Rugby boys, that at that period the main playground of the school was the neighbouring churchyard, where the ancestors of the present Rugbeians, not knowing that the eye of posterity was upon them, played Hide and Seek and Leap-Frog out and in among the tombstones. At Shrewsbury, again, under the famous Dr. Butler, football was absolutely forbidden. It was a game, the Doctor said, "fit only for butcher boys." And, indeed, if the football of those days was, as one is told, a more ferocious edition of the

game, as played in my own memory in the old hacking days, the Doctor was not far wrong. The football of to-day, although sufficiently appalling to foreigners, has been fairly brought within the pale of civilization, and is no longer, as gentle King Jamie styled it, "fitter to maim than to make able the players thereof."

But not only were cricket and football in their infancy, but I can find no trace of any system of compulsory exercise except at Winchester, where there were compulsory walks. In these circumstances the instinct for games found vent in all manner of illegitimate ways. There was fishing on the neighbouring Squire's waters, as in 'Tom Brown.' There were night lines, which the unfortunate fags had frequently to take up by forced marches under cover of night. There were raids on the farm-yards. Tennyson's well-known poem, which tells how the boys hauled a groaning sow up to the leads, and enjoyed for weeks after the pleasures of sucking-pig, is no fiction. The thing was actually done at Eton about the end of the last century. Sheridan, again, had an apple-lost at Harrow, which was recruited, not as now from the greengrocers, but from the surrounding orchards. Then there was poaching. Walter Savage Landor was a notable poacher at Rugby, although he was expelled, not for that, but for lampooning the Headmaster. At Eton,* indeed, the offence was so well recognized that a Headmaster could joke about it to the boys. "One of your comrades is now languishing in prison with the common malefactors for a serious offence against the King himself—poaching in the royal demesnes." Farmer George was not the man to be hard upon a boy of his favourite school for a prank of that nature. At Winchester, again, there was until comparatively recent times badger-hunting—a merciful sport, as there was a careful economy of badgers. The dogs were beaten off when the badger was caught, and the latter returned to his native bag, to run another day. More questionable sports were cock-fighting, dog-fights, cat and dog hunts, all of which were practised at Eton. A more formidable business was bull-baiting and punch at "the Christopher." Among other notices of baiting, we observe the curious expression, "Shelley baits." Much reverence is due to boys, but little is rendered by them—at least to eccentric genius. We are sorry to say that these "Shelley baits" were neither

* Poaching in the Duke of Buccleuch's park at Ditton was not unknown in 1870.

more nor less than baiting the poet Shelley, who at that early age had ventured to assert the rights of man at Eton.

I was wrong, however, to say that there was no such thing as compulsory exercise. There was a good deal of it, although not in the interest of the governed. School sportsmen of to-day might well take a hint from the practice of fag-driving at Rugby in the last century. These, it will be remembered, were the great driving days, when Mr. Weller and other famous whips governed the roads. The Rugbeians of those days caught the ruling passion, and being unable to bear the expense of horses, found that a pack of ten or twelve fags, joined together in rope harness, lashed to some light curriicle made by Mr. Over, the school carpenter, formed an excellent substitute. These novel teams were scientifically "tooled"—such was the phrase—along many of the country roads near Rugby.

A more humorous sport was that of "Jack-o'-Lantern" at Harrow. Some time after dark the gates were opened, and a runner, who knew the country well, let out with a lantern. After a few minutes' law, the rest of the school started in pursuit. Jack was a mischievous sprite, and his skill consisted in showing his lantern when some quagmire, thicket of brambles, or other vile obstruction lay between himself and his pursuers. Here again the fags had the worst of the sport, as they were fagged through "dense and rare" in pursuit of frolicsome Jack. The destruction of clothes, however, appealed more strongly to the mind of authority, and Jack-o'-Lantern went down before the remonstrances of the Doctor's matron. But while the sport endured, the hardships of the younger boys did not end with the chase itself. Very often after one of these runs the brush of a fag would be heard busy at five o'clock on a December morning upon his master's clothes.

The general life of fags was hard. At Shrewsbury, which was nothing if not classical, they were called "Dousl," from the Greek word signifying a slave. At Westminster there was a formula of liberation—"Esto liber, ceteri servi." At Winchester, on the other hand, so early as 1708, the boys were relieved from the "servile and foul office of making their own beds and cleaning out their own chambers." But elsewhere the fags made the beds, brushed the boots, cleaned such knives and forks as there were to clean, and in general performed every menial office. The fagging on half-holidays was endless, the watching out at cricket practice being specially severe. Even a manly

boy might fairly regret the granting of an extra half-holiday, when it entailed standing for many hours under a broiling sun a dozen yards behind the wickets, endeavouring to stop under heavy penalties—for nets were unknown—the violent deliveries of some young school Hercules. Nor were matters at all better in winter, when the fags had to act as a kind of live-touch line at football, and when nothing prevented their being utterly benumbed in cold weather but the kicks and cuffs, which were showered upon them when matters went badly.

Occasionally the fagging took a humorous turn. At Rugby on cold winter nights a big boy would single out some chubby-faced urchin, and say to him, "Look here, you young rascal! you just run upstairs, take your clothes off, and warm my bed for me!" This was an excellent joke; but when a boy had warmed two or three cold beds with his own natural caloric, he was scarcely in a condition to appreciate it. We can borrow another instance of the same kind from Winchester. When a fresh faggot had been flung upon the fire, and the heat became oppressive to the Prefects seated near, some junior would be called up to screen their majesties from the blaze. This living fire-screen had to keep revolving, and to pull out his clothes from the more prominent parts of his person to avoid being scorched. But the climax of humorous ingenuity was reached by the monitors at Westminster, who on one occasion chalked out the floor of the dormitory into the divisions of a draught-board, and played draughts with the fags. When, in the process of the game, one of these live pieces had become a king, he had to take another fag upon his shoulders to indicate the change. There was another very curious kind of fagging at Westminster. It was considered a point of honour amongst the boys that any "Ski"—in modern slang, "Cad"—who ventured to cross Dean's Yard, should be engaged in personal combat by one of their number. "If the "ski" in question was big, the monitor himself would step forward; but if he was little, one of the smaller boys was fagged to fight him.

What, I wonder, has become of the fighting, which was so prominent a feature of the old schools? I asked this question the other day of one of my young friends, and he immediately replied that he knew well the reason in his own case—it was personal fear. I should be sorry, however, to accept this humorous explanation as the true one. I am equally sure that the change is not due to the action of the authorities, for I know

a school second to none in manliness, where fighting is permitted under due supervision, and no fight has taken place there this dozen years. We read in the annals of Eton how the Duke of Wellington thrashed Bobus Smith. But the battle was a great one, and Bobus might have conquered the conqueror of Napoleon. The appetite for fighting was, undoubtedly, much stronger then than now. Readers of Scott's life are familiar with the "bickers," in which Scott and his schoolfellows used to fight with sticks and stones against the boys of the lower orders, and the police of the good town of Edinburgh. Very similar were the battles which the Westminster boys waged against the boys of other London schools with clubs and staves. Any sort of antagonism was apt to end in blows. A few years before Waterloo they had a sham fight at Rugby, and it is unknown how many noses bled and heads were broken at that sham fight.

But the schools of that day were not only rough, they were cruel. I think it would be difficult to find in all the histories a fact which illustrates this better than the killing of the ram at Election tide at Eton. From the end of the seventeenth century it was a custom that a ram should be beaten to death by the boys with clubs. In George II.'s time, on one occasion, the Duke of Cumberland had very appropriately the honour of commencing the butchery. Not long after, an active ram swam across the Thames, and cost the boys a long run before they could despatch it. Such violent exercise under a hot sun was deemed dangerous, and henceforth the rams were hamstrung, and then beaten to death in Weston's yard. This barbarous custom was only abolished in 1747. Nor was their cruelty confined to animals. The great Lord Chatham, himself the bravest Englishman of his time, told Lord Shelburne that "he scarce observed a boy who was not cowed for life at Eton. A Public School might suit a boy of a turbulent, forward disposition, but would not do where there was any gentleness." In Mr. Mansfield's most entertaining book on Winchester, there are some coloured plates, and in both of those entitled, "Breakfast in Hall" and "The School," there is a Prefect with uplifted rod, and a junior endeavouring to receive the blow upon the least sensitive parts of his person. What dinner in Hall was, I have already related. Tunding, however, was limited, but the figures are significant. The strokes were limited from twelve to fifty. We are accustomed to regard the well-known scene in 'Tom Brown,'

where Tom is half-roasted before the Hall fire, as an invention on the part of the ingenious author. But it is not so. It actually happened at Rugby early in the present century in Dr. Ingles' time. Nor can one forget that most touching scene in the same book, where Tom looked at Arthur, and knew at a glance that he was the sort of boy whose early years at a Public School would be a burden to him. No doubt we should reverence these grand old schools, which have been the rough nurses of so many of our greatest men. But I am not sure that pity for the sorrows they have witnessed would not be a more natural sentiment in a child of this better age. There is not a mouldering wall in these old courts but has heard the "sighing of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter," not a pillow in these old dormitories but has been wet with the tears of many generations.

But it is not only that bullies and tyrannous Prefects were much commoner in old days than now. I fear we must admit that the ordinary boy of the last century had a positive delight in inflicting pain. Nothing shows this so well as the ceremonies of initiation, which were common at all the old Public Schools. Gaining a Remove was not then a subject of such unmixed satisfaction as now. At Harrow, for instance, a boy was not considered a member of the Form until he had been "pinched in," that is, had stood in the playground for a fixed period, while his schoolfellows pinched him to their hearts' content. The aspirant had also to be tossed in a blanket, and several bumps against the ceiling were requisite before the process of translation was complete. At Rugby, again, boys were "clodded" upon getting into the Fifth. They had to run between two rows of their classmates, who pelted them with clods of clay. The clods were moistened for favourites, but hardened for the unpopular.

All this brutality was the outcome, no doubt, of the old system of government, which relied mainly upon physical force. The schools were not more brutal than the nation itself. These were the days when forty young felons would be strung up of a morning outside Newgate for forgery and sheep-stealing, and society felt no shock. Was human nature actually different then? It is hard to say. But at all events, government rested on a theory of human nature which is not ours. Readers of Carlyle will recall the conversation between Frederick the Great and the Prussian schoolmaster, Sulzer, upon the subject of

education. Sulzer was ahead of his day, and had been explaining to the King that the old system of education had relied upon force, believing that human nature was more inclined to evil than to good. Now, however, it was possible to adopt a more generous procedure, since the happy discovery that human nature was more inclined to good than to evil.

"Human nature more inclined to good than to evil?" echoed the King. "Ah, my dear Sulzer, you don't know that cursed race as I do!"

There, it may be said, spoke an irreligious man and a cynic. But the theory of the religious was no better. They held that but a few would be saved, while the vast majority of mankind would be lost for ever. Thus they too, in their theological way, pronounced mankind a cursed race. Men were a race of knaves and fools—that was the theory. And if this was true of full-grown men, how much more was it true of boys in masses. "What are you to do," asked the schoolmasters of the olden time, "with these droves of shaggy Shetland ponies, freshly caught and impounded? Appeal to their reason? But they have none. To their mercy and justice? Who would expect justice or mercy from a set of sturdy young barbarians such as these?" They were regarded as hopelessly outside the scheme of salvation. Here and there, indeed, a headmaster, like Dr. Nicoll at Westminster, prepared his boys carefully for confirmation. But at Eton, in Dr. Keate's time, there was no religious instruction whatever, and in general throughout the Public Schools of England there was no systematic attempt to Christianize the boys.

The man who changed all that was Arnold. And it is well that we should remember in what his peculiar greatness consists. It was not so much in his teaching, though that was broad and keen; nor yet in his government, though that was strong and just. It was rather in this, that he was the first man who dared to believe in boy-nature. It has been easy for others to follow, but it was that strong, faithful soul that led the way; who, looking from his quiet country rectory upon the lusty barbarism of the boys of that generation, recognized in them the image of his Master, and appealed to it fearlessly and not in vain.

But in the last century and earlier we are still in the ages of force. Yet with what a cultivated voice they speak:—

“Consurgit, crescitque puer, velut hydra, sub ictu
Florescitque, suis saepe rigatus aquis.”

“Like hydra 'neath the stroke his form he rears,
And flourishes, well watered by his tears.”

But the old system had its great men, too, and the greatest of them was Dr. Busby. His long reign at Westminster began in 1638, and lasted until 1695—a period of fifty-seven years—and when at last he resigned at the green old age of ninety-four, his eye was not dim, nor, as most of his pupils could testify, was his natural force abated. In politics he was a grand old Tory. He prayed at Westminster for Charles I. upon the morning of his execution; and those who know the character of the Puritan rabble of that time, can estimate the courage of the act. After many vicissitudes, the numbers of the school rose shortly after the Restoration to about two hundred and fifty boys, over whom Dr. Busby ruled with the energetic dignity of Rhadamanthus himself. On one occasion, Charles II. came down to see the school, and the Doctor, while dearly valuing the honour, apologized to him for keeping his hat on in his presence, on the ground that it would never do to let the boys believe that there was a greater man than himself.

He was a splendid teacher, particularly great at detecting and developing latent ability by the only method then recognized. Our modern pedagogy has gained in sympathy and patience, but it has lost in simple power. There is no such thing now as the hearty floggings of other days. Doubters that we are, we have lost faith even here, and can never quite rid ourselves of the notion that we are committing an assault. No such counsels of timidity weakened the soul and unnerved the arm of the great Dr. Busby. “I see great talents in that sulky boy,” he would say, “and my rod shall bring them out of him.” And bring them out it did, to the admiration of his contemporaries. There is no better proof of it than this, that he lived to see sixteen of his pupils at one time on the bench of Bishops, in days when Bishops were chosen less for virtue than for learning.

And here it is right that we should speak of the intellectual life of the old schools. Under a great master it was very keen, and redeemed for the best boys the general harshness and brutality. The scholars of these days had but one entrance into the kingdom of knowledge, but by it they penetrated further, it may be, than we, who are baffled by complexity. Nor were the methods of violence injurious in this higher region. The great

teachers compelled industry first by force, and then worked by love. No better motto was ever blazoned upon a place of learning than that which crusty old Meighen put up above the gates of Shrewsbury School in the sixteenth century : Φιλομάθης ἐὰν ἡσ, ἐσὴν πολυμάθης—"if thou love learning, thou shalt be well learned," and, we may add, then only—a truth too often forgotten in these days of mercenary acquisition. It seems certain that boys in these days read much more of the Classics than is possible now. They entered into the vein of antiquity in a manner which has wholly disappeared. We read in the annals of Harrow how "Jones, Parr, and Bennett disputed together in Latin logic," and parcelled out the neighbouring country into classic kingdoms, Jones ruling over Arcadia as Euryalus, Bennett over Argos as Nisus, while Parr, with the title of Leander, was lord of Sestos and Abydos. Many quaint old Latin formulas still survive at Westminster. When dinner was over, the Captain asked the juniors, "Satisne edistis et bibistis?" to which they "too often with hungry lips" made answer, "Satis edimus et bibimus." The Head of the School was called "Monitor monitorum," whose name might seem a standing answer to the question, "Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?" If one was tossed in a blanket in the Long Chamber at Eton, or in the dormitory at Westminster, it was some consolation that he soared to the music of a verse of Martial. "Ibis ab excusso" (here came the preliminary heave), "missus ad astra sago" (and skywards he was sped). When the Westminster boys in their wild rambles had appropriated the door-handles and knockers of the neighbouring citizens, they hung them up over the fireplaces in the dormitory with a Latin inscription :—

"Aeneas hæc de Danais victoribus arma."

And when the day's labours were over, instead of the present "Lights out, gentlemen," came the Latin formula, "Extinctis lucernis intrate lectos." How can our modern youths compete in classic learning with these lads of old Westminster, who talked Latin over their beef and mutton, bullied to a Latin measure, defied the police with a Latin dedication, and went nightly to their rest, breathing, as it were, the sweet savour of the ablative absolute?

The other great Headmaster of the old system was Dr. Keate. Everybody knows Kinglake's description of him. "He was little more than five feet high, but in this space was concentrated

the pluck of ten battalions." "He had a really noble voice, but he had also the power of quacking like an angry duck." "You could not put him out of humour—that is, out of the ill-humour which he thought to be fitting for a Headmaster." His dress, too, was something weird and uncommon. It resembled "partly that of the Emperor Napoleon, and partly that of a widow woman."

Keate was a great teacher and ruler. He was also a tremendous flogger. That saying of John Bright, that force is no remedy, has been canvassed in many different senses, but I suppose we are all agreed that force is no remedy for disorders of the soul. Such, however, was not the opinion of Dr. Keate. On one occasion—so the story goes—he addressed the boys upon the Sixth Beatitude, and the substance of his comment has come down to us. "'Blessed are the pure in heart.' Mind that. It's your duty to be pure in heart. If you're not pure in heart, I'll flog you." Nothing can show better the extent to which flogging was carried than a rule, which the Doctor made, that a boy should lose his Remove, if flogged thrice in one day. And if any one still doubts the comprehensive sweep of Dr. Keate's birch, I need only say that he was once upon the point of flogging a certain aged and eminent statesman, remarkable for his skill in casuistry, who was then a boy at Eton. Contrary to his usual practice, however, the Doctor, instead of proceeding immediately to the matter in hand, gave the culprit an opportunity of explaining himself. It was a great tribute to the powers of persuasion, and a happy augury of the future career of that distinguished man, that he was perhaps the only boy who ever persuaded Keate to forego a flogging, which, I may add, was thoroughly deserved.

In close connection with this system of flogging are the Rebellions, which were a regular feature of the old schools. Upon one occasion Keate was pelted with rotten eggs for altering the hour of Lock up. But no, that is not quite accurate. The eggs were thrown, and they were rotten, but such was the divinity that hedged the Headmastership of Keate, that the young rebels were careful to miss. How he crushed the last rebellion against his authority by flogging eighty members of the Fifth Form, who were taken by subtlety from their beds at midnight and brought in detachments to his study, is a story too well known, if it were not too shocking, to be more than glanced at here. Suffice it to say, that by an admirable mixture

of stratagem and intrepidity he uniformly triumphed over all opposition.

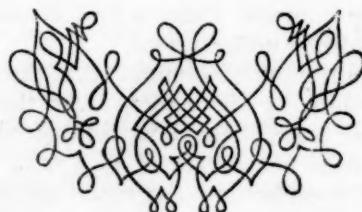
But it was not only against Keate that the boys rebelled. At an earlier period one hundred and sixty Eton boys defied Dr. Foster, and marched in a body to Maidenhead, throwing their school books into the river as they went. At Shrewsbury, under Dr. Butler, at a time when Shrewsbury was a synonym for scholarship, there was the great "Beef" rebellion—an insurrection as important as its cause. At Winchester, again, in 1793 there was a notable rebellion. The boys rose against the injustice of the Warden, ransacked the shops for provisions, barricaded the College, unpaved the Quadrangle to get missiles to defend the Tower, and were only compelled to negotiate almost literally at the point of the bayonet, as three companies of militia were drawn up in College Street. At Rugby, too, there was a dreadful riot, which was only quelled after a stubborn fight by the gallantry of a recruiting sergeant and his men, aided by the farmers and countrymen with their riding-whips; while upon another occasion the walls were placarded with the ominous demand for "Blood"—presumably that of the authorities. Nor was it only against the masters that risings took place. Now it is at Winchester that the juniors "rise and pinion the Prefects." Or again at Rugby, that the fags, vexed by some act of Prefectorial tyranny, resist all the efforts of the masters and Prefects to bring them into school, and for several days wage sullen, servile war.

These rebellions, however, were very seldom successful. To our simple forefathers rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft. The parents almost uniformly supported the authorities, and, if the boys ran home, sent them back to the Doctor to be flogged. The history of these old schools is upon the whole one long Coercion Act unaccompanied by the redress of grievances. It is hardly too much to say that the normal condition was one of anarchy—anarchy rampant under a bad Headmaster, anarchy flogged and recalcitrant under a good.

Yet in the main it must be admitted that the schools of these days did their duty by the nation. At the cost of much injustice and many tears, of characters brutalized, and characters crushed, they turned out a race of men who had the animal virtues in splendid perfection—the race that won for us India and America and the empire of the seas, the race that could "go anywhere and do anything." "Hard pounding this,

gentlemen," cried the Duke at Waterloo, as he rode past a decimated square ; "but we'll show them who can pound the longest." There were twenty-five Rugbeians, to mention one only of the Public Schools, at that great fight, and I cannot but think that they took their pounding the better for that which they had undoubtedly had at Rugby. This pounding has now almost vanished from among us, nor can we regret it. But the question naturally rises, Are modern boys without it as hardy as their progenitors? Foreign newspapers are always telling us that we are a degenerate race, that the British lion has lost his teeth, and that anybody can vex him with impunity. If any foreigner really believes it, let him bid his son tell an English boy so to his face, and the result will probably disabuse him. No, the old heady courage is undoubtedly as great, the old dogged courage, we trust, as great as ever ; but—are we as hardy? I once had the pleasure of hearing Stanley relate some of his African experiences. "It is of no use," he said, "to take the ordinary young man upon a rough expedition, for young men are brought up so soft now-a-days, that they simply die off." It struck me at the time that this was a very serious statement. The influences that make for degeneracy are very powerful. Every year the nation gathers more and more into towns, and is further and further removed from the free country air. In our case nothing but moral force can long sustain the physical. They should look to it who are leaders of our great schools ; we should look to it, every one of us, whether leaders or not, that no unmanly fear of rough weather, no habits of sedentary indolence shall corrupt in the young generation the vigour of our ancient British manhood.

R. J. MACKENZIE.



Just for the Fun of it.

BY PAUL CUSHING.

AUTHOR OF "THE BLACKSMITH OF VOB," ETC.

J.

MR. MARION THAYER was a man about four-and-twenty, tall, well set-up, with broad shoulders that were his own and not his tailor's; his countenance was pleasing, so were his manners, and so was his style of dress. At Harvard he had been noted for three things; to wit—his facility in the composition of amatory sonnets, his exquisitely delicate and feminine handwriting, and the greyness of his abundant and originally dark-brown hair. It is not recorded that he was strong in classics, or mighty in mathematics, or great at logic; but, on the other hand, he made his mark as a base-ball player, and achieved an enviable reputation as a "jolly good fellow."

Being the only child of his father, who was a widower, and as rich as Croesus, the good fellow had had no doubt but what, on leaving College, he would be allowed a competency becoming his station, and an opportunity of seeing "Europe," before he was installed as partner in some big paying concern.

But, sad to relate, Thayer senior took no stock in old Fuller's idea of the Good Parent who "allows his children maintenance according to their quality." Himself, without any Harvard training, had had to make his own pile, and he had made it; and it was a very poor look out, he thought, if his son, with the advantage of a good education, could not begin at the bottom and work his way to the top. Otherwise, what mortal use was Harvard College? A shrewd, hard-headed New Englander of the older type, sentiment was alien to his nature, and he was possessed by an unconquerable prejudice in favour of young men beginning at the bottom.

Hence it came to pass that from Cambridge Mr. Marion

Thayer passed into an insurance office in Boston, in the inglorious position of a common, ordinary, everyday clerk. In the course of eighteen months he was transferred to a branch office in the small but thriving town of Belper some few miles inland. Here he had been for the space of a year; he was called the secretary, and was paid a salary of six hundred dollars per annum; he did all the work, and the manager drew his two thousand dollars a year for watching him do it.

One sultry morning in August, Mr. Marion Thayer dropped as usual into the post-office, extracted the mail from his box, and proceeded to his office, where, he informed himself aloud, as he sank perspiring into a leather-covered revolving arm-chair, that it was no wonder dogs went mad that time of year, with the thermometer at 85° in the shade to start the day with. He was not happy, firstly, because he was idle, business being very slack at this time; and secondly, because the peaks of the White Mountains were in his eyes, and the surf, the glorious surf of Mount Desert was in his ears. The manager, when last heard from, was at Martha's Vineyard; and even that pietistic island loomed pleasant to his imagination, compared with the lively deadness of Belper, at a time when everybody who was anybody was among the hills or within sound of the waves.

Mr. Marion Thayer lit a cigar, and began to examine his mail. From the first envelope he drew forth a photograph and a letter, at which he opened his eyes. He read the letter, looked at the photograph; then he put them and his cigar on the desk, lay back in his chair, and whistled. Presently, he took up his cigar and the photograph, smoked the one and studied the other for some time in silence. At last he exclaimed :

"Well, by all the little bright stars in the firmament, she is a beauty! I wonder who she is?" A thought struck him, and for the first time he took up the envelope and looked at the address. It read, "Miss MARION THAYER, Main Street, Belper, Mass." "Well, that is odd, very. I am Marion Thayer, Main Street, Belper, Mass. But I am not Miss. Never mind; she is a daisy." Here he turned again to the picture. "I wish I knew her. I wonder would she let me keep it, if I asked her in my best manner? I will try, anyway, just for the fun of it."

Miss Cicely Bennett was employed in the photographic establishment of Signor Macaroni of city repute. Her chief employment consisted in dressing her tall and beautiful figure

with artistic elegance, being gracefully attentive to fashionable patrons, and occasionally giving the finishing touch to portrait or painting ; all of which duties she discharged to the complete satisfaction of Signor Macaroni.

A couple of years earlier than the date of our story, Miss Cicely Bennett went to bed one night with two pleasant ideas in her pretty head. Of which the one was that she had a rich father ; and the other, that she was going shortly to Italy to learn to paint, and perhaps to have a studio in the Eternal City itself. Poor lassie ! In the morning she awoke to find, ere the night fell, that her father was a bankrupt and a *felo de se*. Result : the dream of a studio in Rome gave place to the reality of a position with a small salary in Signor Macaroni's photographic establishment. Oh, the irony ! Oh, the pain ! And it was so all round ; but she had the sense and pluck of New England womanhood, and, so far, her pretty brave way of fighting the big world, and taking care of her sweet mother had been successful in a small way.

Pleasant beyond words would have been to her the peaks of the White Mountains and the surf of Mount Desert ; but these things, she well knew, were no longer for her, so she put the thought of them away from her.

One day in August, about noon, seated in a little stuffy room of her own, adjoining the resplendent saloon provided for the accommodation of Signor Macaroni's high-class patrons, Cicely Bennett was eating some cold lunch. Just then the postman came into the office, put down a letter, and went out again. The girl rose and got the letter, and her face brightened as she saw it was for herself, and not the firm. In the old days she had plenty of letters ; but the old days were gone, and with them most of her letter-writing friends. Looking at the exquisitely delicate and regular writing upon the envelope, she said to herself, "I do not know it. I wonder who the lady is ? She would make a good engraver, I should think."

Opening it, she drew forth an enclosed letter and envelope.

"Why, what is this? It is my letter to Marion come back!" She examined the enclosed envelope for a moment, and then she laughed.

"What a silly thing to do, to write 'Mass.' for 'Iowa.' It is as I have told her ; Belper seems only to belong to our State. But where has the letter been ? And my photograph ? Ah, this will explain, I guess ! "

The letter from the unknown correspondent with the beautiful handwriting, ran thus :

“ 48, MAIN STREET,
“ BELPER, MASS.

“ DEAR MISS BENNETT,—You will please forgive me opening the enclosed letter, for as I am the only Marion Thayer in Belper, and my address is Main Street, it was perhaps natural that I should think it was for me. The envelope will probably explain to you the miscarriage. I took the liberty of looking at your photograph. It is very very charming. Indeed, I am so taken with it that I have dared to keep it for twenty-four hours at least, that is, until you order me to send it back. But as I look upon it, I am tempted to hope that its original will not be so unkind as to deprive me of such a lovely vision. With great interest,

“ Believe me, dear Miss Bennett,

“ Very sincerely yours,

“ Tuesday.

“ MARION THAYER.”

Mr. Marion Thayer sat in his office with an unlighted cigar in his mouth. It was a dreadful kind of day, sultry as Sahara. But, by the magic of sentiment, there had sprung up within him a mental breeze that kept him deliciously cool, and made him feel as fresh and joyous as though he had been sitting on the verandah of the Fabyan House. In one hand was the photograph, and in the other a letter, which read as follows :

“ DEAR MISS THAYER,—I thank you for returning me my letter, which was meant for a friend of mine in Belper, Iowa. As regards my photograph, it is very kind of you to say such pretty things concerning it, and since you have flattered my vanity so agreeably, I really cannot find in my heart to ask you for it back. If only as a namesake of my dearest friend, I give it to you with pleasure. And beg to remain,

“ Sincerely yours,

“ CICELY BENNETT.”

A month went by, in which Mr. Marion Thayer wrote no less than nine letters to Miss Cicely Bennett, and received six in return ; their footing was rapidly becoming that of warm friendship. This last word, indeed, had by this time ceased to be an adequate expression of Mr. Marion Thayer's sentiments. Dog-days, comparative idleness, the beautiful carte, and an active imagination had sown within him the seeds of the grand passion. Within the last few days he had discovered the fact ; it came as a shock, and it remained as a twinging shooting-pain. What if

she should suddenly discover the imposition he had put upon her? He loved her, he thought, madly. He had even indulged in the perilous luxury of confessing his love; and she, with sweet womanly fervour, had responded with the admission that the affection was not all on one side. That sweet *confessio amoris* made him tremble at the thought of what would happen should she discover the truth. There came with fierce insistence the prompting to reveal himself, and dare all to woo her in his proper sex and character of a man. Yet the chances were that she would have nothing more to do with him. It would serve him right, he knew, but the sense of being punished after one's deserts would hardly compensate him for the loss of her.

"When are you going to send me your photograph? Do let me have one soon. Grey eyes, brown hair, tall figure, &c., &c., these are very vague items, and do not help one much in forming a correct idea of the real person. I wonder if you are the least bit like what I have pictured you? I want so much to look upon the image of your face, as I have already done, with so much pleasure, upon the image of your mind. I shall look for your carte every day."

This was in her last letter, to which he had already replied :

"I have not a portrait fit to send you, and there is no good photographer here. I expect to visit Boston in about a fortnight, when I shall be taken again. In the meantime, rest content with your fancy picture. I am afraid you will like it better than the real one."

There was something sinister and ominous, he thought, in that last sentence; but he let it stand. He went out and mailed the letter, then he came back and sat down at his desk; he spread out some papers, took a pen in his hand, and began to reflect upon the foolishness of folly.

Presently the door opened, and in walked Lawyer Kerr. He was a tall, handsome man of military bearing, with hair tinged with silver, and a superb moustache black as a raven's wing. His face was statuesque, strong, boldly chiselled and beautiful; at rest, its expression was stern, but in conversation it was curiously mobile, and varying in expression. His dark brown eyes were terrible engines of war when directed against the battlements of women-soul. Though old enough to be his father, he was Marion Thayer's great and trusted friend; he had known the young gentleman's mother years agone, ere she became Mrs. Thayer.

"Well, Thayer, my lad, how are you? Hot enough to hatch chickens without an incubator, ain't it?"

"Good morning, Colonel. Have a seat. So you are going to run for District Attorney, I hear?"

The Colonel sank into a chair, removed his white hat, unfastened several of the top buttons of his white waistcoat, and picking up a palm-leaf fan worked it vigorously.

"Then you hear what isn't true, my boy. There's too much work and too little pay in that office for me. I guess some of my friends think I ought to be made Judge of Probate, and they—But there, it is a secret as yet, remember. I say, Thayer, how would you like to be a girl?"

Mr. Marion Thayer gave a visible start at the absurd question, and looked the Colonel keenly in the face as he answered.

"Haven't thought it out. Give it up. How would you?"

"Immensely, if I were thirty years younger, knew as much as I know now, and could be beautiful into the bargain. I'd have the world at my feet in no time. Have you ever thought of being an actor, Thayer?"

"Yes, I had some thoughts that way once, when I was at Harvard. Why do you ask?"

"Because I don't think you would succeed in it."

"Thanks. Fishing with a long line, ain't you?"

"Then I will try a shorter one, if you have no objection?"

"Not the slightest. Better try how a weed will help you," said Thayer, with well-affected indifference, offering his case.

The Colonel took a cigar and lighted it. Then he said:

"I was in the post-office this morning; had to see Rawson on business. Our postmaster is a worthy man, but, as you probably know, he is as curious as a magpie."

"And as wise as a calf."

"And not much wiser. Says he to me, 'Colonel Kerr, would you mind making an affidavit that to the best of your belief your friend over the way, Marion Thayer, is a ——' 'Is a what?' I asked. 'Is a man—or a woman—I don't care a red cent which, only let it be one or t'other,' he said, laughing."

"Look here, Colonel, that fellow Rawson's a beast!" exclaimed Mr. Marion Thayer, with considerable energy.

The Colonel fluttered his fan, and smiled.

"Of course I wanted to know the meaning of it all. His

explanation was to the effect that, for some time now, letters have been coming through the post addressed to Miss Marion Thayer, 48 Main Street, Belper, Mass. Of course they were put in your box and,—well, he's gotten his curiosity thoroughly whetted. And to tell the truth, he has whetted mine too."

"The wretch! the miserable, dyspeptic, chattering, prying donkey of a democrat! Wouldn't I like to pummel him, just! Why, in forty-eight hours all Belper will know it, and the *Gazette* will have it in big type!"

And Mr. Marion Thayer looked the image of indignant despair.

"No, I hardly think it will be so bad as that. I took the precaution of expounding to him a somewhat imaginary law of libel, which I guess rather scared him. I also suggested that it might be a tough job to re-elect him next year, if I persuaded my friends to oppose him. I guess I've quietened him. But there is somebody else I am afraid I cannot quieten."

"Who is that?" enquired Thayer, in dismay.

"He is a very pertinacious fellow; hangs on like a bull-dog. He is the only man in Belper that's too many for me."

"For God's sake, Colonel, speak! who is it?"

"Ah, you know him well enough. It is Colonel Kerr! And he is not to be put off, my boy, so out with it, and have done with it."

Mr. Marion Thayer pulled himself together, and made a clean breast of it. The Colonel listened attentively until the singular narrative was finished, then he reached forward, and, picking up the photograph which lay with its face down upon the desk, said,

"And this is her portrait, eh? By Lincoln, though, but she is a fine girl! If her soul is half as good as her face, she is a prize worth capturing. How old did you say she was?"

"Just turned twenty."

"A bonnie thing, a glorious sweet creature to look at. Bachelor as I am, I love a good sweet woman. But, Thayer, you are skating on deucedly thin ice, and the sooner you get off the better. My advice is, go home and make yourself look your best, then board the first train for Boston, and go and see the lady right off! Nothing else will do. You owe it to her and to yourself."

"Yes, I think it's the best thing to do. I will go right away. Oh, what a terrible fix I am in, though!"

II.

Washington Street, dear old twistum twirlum Washington Street—too narrow by half, yet may it never be widened!—was full of street-cars, omnibuses, Herdics, buggies, sulkies, carryalls, waggons and carts of every description, and throngs of well-dressed people. Among the latter items was Mr. Marion Thayer, exceedingly well dressed, and affecting the well-known and not particularly graceful style of movement yclept the Harvard gait. He had all the air of Yankee superiority, coolness, and self-confidence, which is little more than a trick of manner and a serviceable social mask. That elegant lounging with his *sang-froid* bearing, though outwardly calm as a rural landscape, was inwardly more heated, more crowded, more tumultuous and restless than the busy thoroughfare he was treading.

As he passed the Old South Church with its implacable inscription, the fingers of the clock stood at ten minutes past three. Presently he came to a sudden halt: over the way, in large gold lettering he read this legend, "Macaroni's Photographic Studio."

His hour was upon him. He crossed the street, and ascended two flights of marble stairs, followed by another flight covered with cocoanut-matting; through a door he entered into a long, narrow gallery, hung mainly with theatrical and operatic celebrities in professional costume, out of which he passed into what may be called the office. This room was lighted from the roof, and contained several chairs, a couple of mahogany counters covered with glass cases, and a large number of crayons and pictures in oil. One of the counters terminated in a kind of cabinet structure, partly of wood and partly of glass, that looked like an enclosed desk in a counting-house.

The room seemed empty, and Mr. Marion Thayer heaved a sigh of relief. The next moment he heard a slight movement, and caught sight of a female figure coming out of the cabinet. He turned his face away quickly, and gave his whole attention to some paintings on the wall. Presently he heard a soft, musical voice saying—

"Excuse me, sir; can I serve you in any way?"

Mr. Marion Thayer immediately faced round, prepared to be brave, he thought; but the vision he beheld fairly staggered

him. In front of him stood a tall, fair girl, dressed in plain black dress and white cuffs and collar, but of such exceeding loveliness of countenance, that his heart melted within him at the sight. Her face was a delicate pink and white oval of marvellous purity ; long dark lashes seemed to throw a shade over her deep, violet-coloured eyes, while her head was a glorious mass of rich golden hair, that played upon her forehead in wee ringlets of burnished gold. What a splendour of colour ! What a purity of complexion ! What a beauty of outline !

Did such women, then, really exist on earth ? He had never believed it, in spite of all that was written by old romancers and modern novelists. He had even doubted the good faith and personal belief of these preachers of a womanly beauty strong enough to subdue and slay the strongest man. Yet here was one of them !

Good photography is a cunning flatterer and beautifier of humanity, as a rule. But no photography could do justice to this girl—she was so vital, so exquisite, so rich in the magic of colour and outline.

"Pardon me. What did you say?" faltered Mr. Marion Thayer.

"I wished to know if I could serve you in any way."

"Oh, thank you, thank you very much. How much are these things a hundred, please?" he said, pointing to a case full of cabinet-sized photographs.

"We sell them by the dozen, sir, as a rule, though I don't know why we could not sell them by the hundred, if you would like so many."

This with a little laugh ; she was used to eccentric patrons.

"Oh, no ; don't trouble about it. How much a dozen did you say ?"

"Eight dollars, sir."

"Eight dollars ? Thank you ; you are very kind."

"Would you like to be taken, sir ? I believe we could arrange to take you to-morrow morning."

"Taken ? Thank you ; I wonder what I should look like ? You don't take feelings, do you ? Only faces ? Really. I don't know what to say."

Which was quite true. For the life of him he could not bring himself to tell that splendid creature what had brought him there. She smiled as she answered—

"In taking the face we manage to take a good deal of feeling often."

"You do not take them yourself, I suppose?"

"Oh, no, sir."

"Ah, what a pity! I would sit at once, if you would only 'take' my feelings for me—take them right away, and give them to the poor of the parish."

"I shall be glad to fix a time, sir, if you wish to be taken," she said, and her sweet voice sounded cold as ice.

"Pardon me; I fear I have vexed you. I—I was only joking. You don't like a joke, do you?"

"No, sir; not poor ones."

"Ah, that is cruel! Would you forgive a good joke—played upon yourself?"

"I am sorry, sir, but I really have not time to waste. I am very busy. I wish you good-day, sir."

And with a gracious inclination of her head, Miss Cicely Bennett retired from view, rather at a loss to decide whether the gentleman was inclined to presume on her position, or had a bee in his bonnet. Mr. Marion Thayer retired, with a desperate feeling that life was not worth living any longer.

"And so your expedition was a failure, eh? Sit down, Thayer, and let me hear all about it. Light a cigar, and don't act the tragical more than you can help."

It was the Colonel that spoke; bootless and coatless, he sat in a low rattan chair, his feet on a sofa. The French window of his bachelor's snuggery was wide open, to admit the deliciously cool night breeze that came in puffs. The three-quarter moon was framed in the window casement, and filled the room with its spectral, haunting light. Outside, the frogs whistled in chorus, and chirruping insects made a noise as if Queen Mab and her tribe of wee courtiers had taken all to the scissors-grinding trade, and were busy at their tiny treadles. Under the shadow of the trees on the lawn, fire-flies were visible.

"I feel tragical," sighed Mr. Marion Thayer, obeying the Colonel's injunction.

"What did you say to her?"

"Oh, for heaven's sake don't ask me! I don't know. I only know that I made a huge ass of myself."

"Oh, that's nothing. That was a foregone conclusion. What were your tactics?"

"Tactics? Well, I looked at her and went dizzy; that is all the tactics there were on my part."

"Still, my dear fellow, it was your duty before you left to let her know the truth. Don't you see how you have complicated matters?"

"Oh, yes, I know all about it. But look here, Colonel. I would as soon have jumped down a coal-pit as have told her—unless I had bolted right away!" exclaimed Mr. Marion Thayer, in a tone that sent the Colonel into a spasm of laughter. When he recovered himself he said—

"So fierce as that—eh? Is she at all like her photograph?"

"About as like as a real sunset is to a painted one?"

"Is that so? A brunette?"

"No, sir; a blonde. O, what eyes! O, what hair! A face like an angel! Such a thing of glory and beauty I never saw the like of!"

"I want to know! And how was she dressed?"

"Lightly, I hope, for it was sweltering hot."

"We will take that for granted. But did she wear figured muslin or watered silk?" laughed the Colonel.

"Neither. It was some kind of a black stuff. I remember seeing white cuffs and collar, but no jewelry, I think. But her dress was nothing. I really saw nothing but herself—her wonderful face and head."

"Her feline ladyship spat at you, did she?"

"No, she didn't spit. She smiled and—bowed. Such a bow! If the side of a house had fallen on me, it couldn't have been more crushing. But there, the game is up. I may as well hope to pluck one of those stars yonder, for a button-hole, as to win her now."

The Colonel was of a sympathetic nature, and, having a strong liking for his friend, did his level best to put heart of grace into him. In this he so far succeeded that when, after a long talk, he said at parting, "Keep a stout heart, man. Do as I advise you, and I guess there's a chance yet," his companion answered, in a more cheerful tone, "Yes, I'll go and write her at once. I guess I shall find it easier writing."

(To be concluded.)



Our Library List.

TROPICAL AFRICA. By HENRY DRUMMOND. (1 vol. 6s. *Hodder & Stoughton.*) We are likely before long to hear a good deal about the Shiré Highlands of "Central East Africa," and a better means for acquainting the public with an outline of the situation than Professor Drummond's volume can hardly be imagined. Most people will probably be surprised to hear how much has been already accomplished for civilization by British enterprise. Steamers on the inland lakes, a metalled road nearly 50 miles long,—these are hard facts of progress. Of the climate too, with its frosty nights under the equator, and the undeveloped capabilities of the country, we are told just enough to make us think we know something. Again, the chapter on the White Ant, which turns a tree-trunk to matchwood in a single night, is deeply engrossing. The book has a serious purpose, which it may compass none the less easily for its attractively slight texture. Slavery, as the author pathetically says, is "the heart-disease of Africa :" he bids Livingstone's countrymen cure it.

REYNELL TAYLOR. A BIOGRAPHY. By E. GAMBIER PARRY. (1 vol. 14s. *Kegan Paul.*) General Taylor is an excellent specimen of the disinterested Englishmen who do the work of India with the utmost devotion though with little reward. "The Bayard of the Punjab," as he was called, joined the Indian army at an early age, and played a distinguished part in the Gwalior campaign, the first Sikh war of 1846, and again in 1848-9, when his capture of the Fort of Lukkee was of great importance in restoring peace on the Trans-Indus frontier. From the time of the annexation of the Punjab till he retired in 1877, General Taylor held civil employment under the Government, and a perusal of this book will give a good idea of the work and responsibilities of our Indian administrators. Mr. Parry writes with the greatest enthusiasm about his subject, and his accounts of somewhat obscure campaigns and life on the Frontier are interesting, though his style throughout suffers from over-exuberance.

A SEASON IN SUTHERLAND. By J. E. EDWARDES-MOSS. (1 vol. 4s. 6d. *Macmillan.*) It is perhaps a pity, from the sportsman's point of view, that the author, out of many years' experience, has chosen 1887—probably one of the worst seasons on record—for descrip-

tion in this elegant little volume. But on the other hand we owe gratitude to the same dry summer for giving Mr. Moss leisure to look beneath the surface where gun and rod reign, and impart some of the rural delights with which his Highland quarters teem, for the benefit of less favoured readers. By his own example he easily vindicates the claim of all genuine sportsmen to be something more than slaughterers ; even on blank days, garden and moor, river, loch and ocean lose none of their charm for those who, like Mr. Moss, are close observers and true lovers of nature. His book is sweet with the fragrance of heather, and eloquent with the river's murmur.

BOATING. By W. B. WOODGATE. (1 vol. 10s. 6d. *Longmans.*) The new volume of the Badminton Library contains a large amount of information on the subject of rowing, but it contains no word about canoeing or river sailing-boats, which might reasonably have been included. Nor is it quite up to date in its own line ; for instance, we failed to find a single reference to "swivel-rowlocks," an important invention now widely employed. Upon the technical details of coaching and training for races Mr. Woodgate speaks with the voice of authority ; there is an interesting account of the gradual development of rowing from the old Thames wherry to the modern racing-eight ; while Dr. Warre, in a valuable introduction, takes us back to the Triremes of antiquity.

THE STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A HOUSE-BOAT. By WILLIAM BLACK. (3 vols. *Sampson Low.*) Really there was nothing very strange or adventurous about the career of the "Nameless Barge," except for a few hours in the Severn estuary ; but the record of several weeks' excursion along our inland waterways is charmingly told with the author's acknowledged skill in local colouring and vivid narrative. Of course on board the House-boat the "old old story" is told once more ; how Miss Peggy Rosslyn, a sweetly-sophisticated American, with a character for flirtation, and Jack Duncombe, an amateur dramatist with "expectations," do not fall into the little trap that Queen Tita has laid for them, but find perfection by an independent process, he in a Ward of Chancery, she—true woman!—in a son of Mars, one Sir Ewen Cameron, V.C., of Inverfask.

THE REBEL ROSE. (3 vols. *Bentley.*) There is originality, even audacity, in making a descendant of the Stuarts figure in a novel of modern society as a Pretender to Crown estates, and aspire to Royal dignity. The author himself seems to perceive the absurdity of the situation ; for, as the book advances, the precious "claims" are gradually obscured and replaced by such commonplace accessories of the socio-political novel as love-making and party jargon. Mr. Bellarmin's Tory Democracy and Sir Victor Champion's strictly conscientious Parlia-

mentary intrigues are types too familiar to be entertaining. Of the ladies, Josephine, Marchioness of Saxon, is incredible, Mrs. Rivers and Madame Spinola scarcely tolerable. Mary Beaton, representative of all the Stuarts, might have become attractive had her claims been persisted in; but when, in order to see how the poor live, she is made to visit an East-end music-hall, dressed, by way of *incognito*, in boy's clothes, we are irresistibly reminded that the whole book is a burlesque.

THE REVERBERATOR. By HENRY JAMES. (2 vols. *Macmillan.*) Here we have Mr. James on his own especial line of depicting a few fine shades of still life with no elaborate plot to disturb, nor crowd of characters to exhaust his faculties of analysis. The gay movement of Paris forms a background to the diverse emotions of two American families, the one wholly without social standing, while the other is penetrated with a sense of its position when they are brought into contact with one another by a proposed marriage. The subject is no new one, but the people, the lovely ignorant girl with the most unassuming of wealthy fathers, and a vulgar sister who alone shows any enterprise, belong to Mr. James alone, and nothing can be cleverer or more entertaining than the touches by which he makes them live. The hero is a mere "social animal," and it does him credit that he is able to resist the attempts of his devoted sisters and their important French husbands, who are so amusingly described, to break off his engagement with the girl who talks of "Parus." Another clever character is Mr. Flack, a terrible young journalist, whose use of the heroine's prattle as material for his society paper, and its consequences, brings a bewilderingly new aspect of life before her.

